THE

LETTERS PATENTS OF THE PRESBYTERIE:

VVith

THE PLEA AND FRVITS OF THE PRELACIE.

Manifested out of the Scriptures, Fathers, Ecclesiasticall Histories, Papists, and sundrie other Authors.

('3')

By *Iames ~~Peregrin~~* Partridge

LVK. 16. 14. 15.

All these things also heard the Pharises, vvho vvere couetous, and they derided him.

And he said vnto them, ye are they vvhich iustifie your selues before men, but God knoweth your hearts: for that vvhich is highly esteemed amongst men is abomination in the sight of God.

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To the ſacred honour of the Lord God, Creator of all things, and Iudge of all men.

ALmightie and euerlaſting God, vvho haſt ſet thy king vpon thy holy hill of Sion, & giuen him a kingdom that all nations, and languages ſhould *ſerue* him, a kingdom that ſhall haue no ende; giue vs vvee beſeech thee to knovv vvhat it is to haue him for the Chriſt, the only King and Lavvgiuer of his church, the *Anointing* that thou haſt giuen vs, and to ſee that vvee haue, *no neede that any man teach vs, but as the ſame anointing teacheth vs of all things*, by himſelfe, and by his Apoſtles, and Prophets. O teach vs at laſt to *abide in him*, as *he* hath taught *vs*, that *vvhen he ſhall appeare, vvee may not be aſhamed before him at his comming.* Thou only, O Lord, canſt beſt iudge vvhat are the things that truly belong to his kingdom and gouerument, vvhat ſubordinate officers thou haſt giuen to guide thy church, and vvho are Intruders and vſurpers: vvho ſerue aright to maintaine thy Truth and gouernment, and vvho to obſcure and oppreſſe the ſame: vvho ſerue thy kingdom in a right vvay, & vvho only pretend it, not ſeruing thee the Lord, *but theire owne bellies*. To vvhome then, but to thee, O dreadfull God, ſhould I thy poore ſeruant dedicate theſe his vveake labours? For thou, o Lord God, beſt knoweſt the work that thou haſt vvrought in thine, thou art beſt able to trie, and teach others to trie *the Spirits vvhether they be of God, or noe:* thou *ſeareheſt the heart & the reines*, the end and ſcoape of euery mans vndertakings, vvho are led by *thy Spirit into all Truth*, and vvho are only lifted vp in an opinion thereof: vvho finding thy guidance in ſome things, preſume that thou teacheſt them all vvhich they beleeue, or to vvhich they are conformable, and doe not rather thinke it better to beleeue all that thou teacheſt, to be conformed to that, and be reformed by it: vvho haue thy Truth in reſpect of the perſons, authoritie and

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benefits

benefits of men, and vvho in reſpect of thee alone, the only fountaine of Truth. Thou, o God, the righteous Iudge, ſeeſt vvhether I haue collected theſe proofes & obſeruations for the cauſe of Chriſt alone, or for ſiniſter reſpects; thou beſt knovveſt thy ovvne Truth, and art beſt able to defend it, and all them that ſeeke it. Princes are men: ſuch as truſt to much to theire iudgment and protection, do oft finde themſelues revvarded accordingly: Thou haſt the hearts of kings, and all other men, in thy hand, thou canſt turne them to ſee and acknovvledge thy truth. Thou only, that *makeſt light to ſhine out of darknes*, canſt *ſhine in theire hearts, to giue them true knovvledge* and obedience. Other Patrons can a litle countenance a booke vvith their greate names & favours: but thou, o Kings of kings haſt *a name aboue all names:* thou only canſt *perſvvade Iapheth to dvvell in the tents of Shem.* Thou only canſt informe and aſſure the heart in thy ovvne Truth. VVho is able to hinder the light thereof, vvhen thou vvilt haue it knovvne & acknovvledged? O therefore *be mercifull vnto vs,& cauſe the light of thy countenance to ſhine vpon vs, that thy vvay may be knovvne vpon earth,& thy ſauing health vnto all nations*; that they may ſee the things that belong vnto their peace, leaſt haueing them hid from theire eies, they *groape at noone day, ſtraine at a gnat & ſwallow a Camel.* Thou art the greate God that vvilt take account of euerie mans vvorkes, and bring euerie ſecret vvorke, and counſeil vnto light. It is thy grace and protection that I ſtand in neede of. O be vvith me, and forſake me not, but ſhevv thy might in my vveakenes. This grace & vvhat elſe thou knovveſt needefull for me, the Reader, or any of thy afflicted people, grant vnto vs all for Ieſus Chriſt his ſake, the Sonne of thy loue, to vvhome vvith thee, and thy holy Spirit, three perſons and one God, be aſcribed, as due is, all honour, might, maieſtie and dominion, novv and for euer.

IF a man, Christian Reader, liuing in Rome, Spaine, or any other kingdom, where the truth is in any point oppressed, should to conuince and conuert his nation, be desirous to set out a booke on that subiect: he would easely conceiue, that by making himselfe publick he should nothing benefit the cause, he might fall and perish in the inquisition before three men could come to reade it: and that therefore it were better to liue obscurely, and get it secretly printed and dispersed: who could for this either blame him, or vnder nice pretences, reiect his proofes fairely deducted out of Gods word? So, if I, considering that I haue liued an obscure life, am smale and of no reputation, that in this case to make my self publick would doe no good, but rather raise against me many mightie and vndeserued ennemies, & get my labour in Christs, cause the sooner suppressed, haue therfore tooke a like priuate course, to the ende that Gods Truth might finde the more vnpreuentible passage: thinke not, that it will excuse any man, to say of me, he is a libeller, or as the Pharises did of our Lord and Sauiour, *As for this fellow wee knowe not whence he is.* Ioh. 9. 29. 33. But if God, by so weake a meanes as I am, open thine eyes in a point of any consequence, say rather of the poore seruant, as the man borne blinde of the Lord and maister, *If this man were not of God, he could doe nothing.* Let me not be reckoned an *enemie for manifesting Gods truth: but remember that herein thou * 1. Ioh. 5. 3 shewest thy *loue to God, if his doctrine, *his commandements be not grieuous vnto thee* For his sake therefore reade this smale treatise and hereby thou maiest see a reason, why many learned ministers do not or will not know or regard the truth in this point: why the most in England are so vnwilling to know any thing thereof, least it should hinder them from subscribing, and hauing of a good liuing, or cause them to be put to silence, if they should either preach, write, or speake against the gouernment of the Bishops.

If I haue proued that it makes greatly to the saluation of the Church, and the preseruing of the faith it selfe, in that puritie and simplicitie, wherein it was left vnto vs by the Apostles and Prophets, that the Truth of God, be well knowne and manifested, in this point: remember it is thy duty, not to haue that blessed Truth *vvith respect of persons*: Iam. 2. 1. but in a right receiuing of it, to *Kisse the Sonne least he be angrie*, Psa. 2. and euen to crie mightely to God, to reforme that Church, by whose power, any part of his Testament, lies darkened vnder a corrupt glosse, or being cleered, is forced to seeke corners. And thus hopeing that God will raise vp many friends to his owne cause, and giue them hearts to vse all honest wisdom and dilligence in such a case, I rest *Thine in Christ Iesus*

James Peregrin.

THE LETTERS PATENTS OF THE PRESBYTERIE,

VVith the Plea and fruites of the Prelacie.

MAn, fallen in Adam, going after his ovvne vnderſtanding in ſpirituall things, vvalketh on in darknes, and oft thinketh himſelfe in the right vvay, vvhen he erreth & knovveth not vvhether he goeth: vvherein vvho is many times mort blinde in ſom things, then he that thinks himſelfe *perfit, a Scribe*, and a meſſenger fit for the kingdome of God? vvherefore our Sauiour thanketh his Father, that *he had hid theſe things from this vviſe & learned, & reuealed them to babes.* And the Apoſtle ſaith, *vvhere is the vviſe? vvhere is the Scribe? vvhere is the diſputer of this vvorld? Hath not God made fooliſh the vviſdom of this vvorld?* But leaſt ſom man might here ſay, If this be oft the caſe of Rabbins, Doctours and Guides, vvhat ſhall become of their poore Diſciples? If the Shepheards erre, the ſheepe muſt needes vvander, and be in a vvorſe eſtate: the Lord in his greate mercie promiſed, that he vvould povvre *out of his ſpirit vpon all fleſh, vpon theirs ſeede* and offspring: and make *the blinde to ſee.* VVhich he ſo fully performed, as to *chooſe to fooliſh things of the vvorld to confound the vviſe.* And yet becauſe many vvould pretend the Spirit that maniſeſt litle, but ſom fevv vvell knowne principles, & the viſiō of their ovvne hęart, and that they vvreſt the Scriptures to confirme it, he bids his people *trie the ſpirits*, and addeth, theſe gracious promiſes, fulfilled in the Goſpell, *They ſhall all know*

Mat. 11. 1. Cor. 1. 20.

Ioel 2. 28. Iſa. 44. 3. Chap. 48. 16. 1. Cor. 1. 27.

Ier. 31. 34.

1.Cor.2. 16. *me from the least of them to the greatest of them. The spiritual man discerneth all things.* Neuerthelts to shevv they should come to it by a Rule, he had said, *A law shall proceede from me, & I vvill make my iudgment to rest for a light of the people.*

Isa.51.4. chap.2.3. *mine armes shall iudge the people. The Iles shall vvaite upon me, and on mine Arme shall they trust.* That is on my vvord.

Mich.4.2. For the Prophets had said, *The Lavv shall goe forth of Sion, and the vvord of the Lord out of Ierusalem, And he shall iudge amonge the nations*: euen in this vvorld: The reuealed

2.Tim.3. 15.16. vvord is sufficient in all matters of faith and saluation, *For doctrine reproofe, and instruction, that the man of God may be perfit.*

Ioh.16. The holy Ghost teacheth that vvhich Christ hath spoken, and no other doctrine, for saith our Lord, *He shall not speake of himselfe, but vvhatsoeuer he shall heare, that shall he speake,*

Reuel.4.1. *and he vvill shevv you things to come* (as the things in the Reuelation, that some shall *depart from the faith*, & the like.)

Ioh.16.15 *He shall take of mine and shew unto you.* For he had said, *All things that I haue heard of my Father, I haue made knowne*

*Act.20. 27. vnto you: therefore the holy Ghost brought all these to their remembrance: and they haue *declared to vs all that councell of God.* That vvhich is vvritten, is that vvhich Christ hath

1.Ioh.1.3. spoken to them, as Iohn saith, *That vvhich vvee haue seene and heard declare vvee unto you*, that is to say in these our vvritings, *that ye also may haue fellovvship vvith vs*, that is in the knovvledge of these things, and truly *our fellovvship is*

*1.Cor.2. 16. *vvith the Father and vvith his Sonne Iesus Christ*, that is in knovving the * minde of God. He excepteth nothing reuealed, vvhether it be aboute the conuersion and perseuerance of the Saints, or Predestination it selfe, so far as it is reuealed in

*Cant.5.4 Psa.45.1. the Scripture. This vvord is an * *ointment powred out.* It ministreth grace in them that art his. *Grace vvas powred into his lips:* and saith Iohn, *ye needе not that any man teach you, but*

as the ſame anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth 1.Ioh.2.27
and is no lie: VVhich I vvill no further vrge againſt the vn-
vvritten verities, preſumptions, errours and blaſphemies of
the Church of Rome. For he, vvho is the vvord, ſaith, *I am* Ioh.8.12.
the light of the vvorld: he that followeth me ſhall not vvalke in
in darkneſſe, but ſhall haue the light of life. And this is not
only meant of Apoſtles and Doctors, but of euerie true be-
leeuer, as he ſaith, *I am come a light* into the vvorld, that chap.12.
vvhoſoeuer beleeueth on me ſhould not abide in darkneſſe. And 46.46.
to ſhevv vs that in all matters of faith vvee ought to be iud-
ged by the reuealed vvord novv, ſince vvee muſt, vvhether
vvee vvill or no, be iudged by it at the laſt day, he addeth,
He that reiecteth me, and receiueth not my vvords, hath one that
iudgeth him: the vvord that I haue ſpoken, he ſhall iudge him
in the laſt day. Certaine it is, that Chriſt as he is the eteernall
vvord manifeſted and preached, is the only Iudge and Gouer-
nour of his church in matters of faith & ſaluation: therefore
it is ſaid to him, *Rule thou in the midſt of thine enemies.* The Pſa.110.
kingdome, and dominion *vnder the vvhole heauen* is giuen to Dan.7.14.
him, vvho is *the Arme of God, that ſhould rule for him.* God Iſa.40.10.
ruleth by his power for euer, that is by his vvord; of vvhome is
ſaide, *I vvill giue thee* for a couenant of the people, *for a light* Pſa.66.2.
of the Gentiles. I haue ſet my King upon my holy hill of Sion.
He ſhall reigne ouer the Houſe of Iacob for euer. Luk.1.33.

BVt becauſe heretieks, and prophane and vnruly perſons,
vvould ariſe in the church: & there muſt needes be ſome
orders & officers in the church, before vvhom ſuch might be
conuẽted, & by vvhoſe paines in alleadging the ſcriptures, they Act.20.
might be conuinced, reformed & ordered: he ordained ſom to
be ouerſeers of the flock, that ſhould *not be nouices*, but vvell 1.Tim.3.6
gronded in the faith, *to hold faſt the faithfull word as they haue* Tit.1.9.
bene taught, that they may be able by ſound doctrin both to exhort

and

and conuince the gainſayers. VVhich vvhile they faithfully doe, vvithout preſſing for doctrines the commandements of men: it is not ſo much, they that rule, as Chriſt the vvord that ruleth in them: therefore it is ſaid: *The gouernment ſhall be vpon his ſhoulders. He ſhall ſmite the earth vvith the rod of his mouth.* And ſo they are ſubordinate Shepheards and Biſhops to feede the flock, to keepe and reduce the ſheepe vnto the obedience of the *chiefe Shepheard & Biſhop of theire ſoules*, vvhich is Chriſt. In regard vvhereof, *the vveapons of theire vvarfare are not carnall, but mightie through God, to the pulling downe of ſtrong holds, caſting downe imaginations, and euerie high thought, that exalteth it ſelfe againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captiuitie euery thought to the obedience of Chriſt.*

Iſaie 9.6. chap.11.4. 1.Pet.2.25 chap.5.4. 2.Cor.10.4

The greateſt queſtion is aboute the dignitie, iuriſdiction, povver and authoritie of theſe Officers, and eſpecially of the office of a Biſhop: vvhether by Gods Teſtament, and ordinance it be to ſuperintend ouer other Paſtors and Elders in a dioceſſe or Prouiuce: or, as others affirme, Paſtoral, ouer one flocke and congregation, vvherein he is an Elder, and vvith other Elders an ouerſeer of the ſame. In vvhich controuerſie, men, that are not vvillingly ignorant, or vvilfully obſtinate and blind, may receiue full ſatisfaction by the cleere teſtimonies of Scripture, and conſent of the Fathers, ſhevving vs the old and good vvay that all ſhould ſeeke & follow. VVheras he that commeth vvith a ſcoffing, or preiudicate cenſure, *ſpeaking euill of the things he knowes not, or in* frowardnes *will not know*, can not ſo eaſily diſcerne the Truth. *A ſcorner ſeeketh vviſdome, and findeth it not, but knowledge is eaſy to him that vvill vnderſtand. The ſecret of the lord is vvith them that feare him, and he vvill ſhew them his couenant.*

Iude 10. Pro.3.22. Pro.14.6. Pſa.25.14.

VVhen Paul the Apoſtle of the Gentiles had firſt preached the Goſpell in diuers of their cities, he & Barnabas retourned againe

gaine to Lystra, & to Iconium, and Antioch, *to confirme the soules of the Disciples*, & exhort them to *continue* in the faith: & then it is said expresly, *They ordained them Elders in euerie church by election.* The vvord in the Greeke is *Presbuterois* Presbyters or Elders. Of it comes the Latin vvord Presbyter, vvhich signifies an Elder: and vvhich, as all confesse, in the primatiue ages of the church, was giuen (if not to som others, yet at least) to euerie ordinarie Pastor, of euerie congregatiō, in regard, that he, vvatched ouer the flock, to keepe them sound in the faith, and holy in life and manners. In place of those that men call parsons, or Curates of seuerall Parishes, there vvere then presbiters of seuerall congregations. Our vvord preist seemes to come from the French vvord *Prestre* a preist, vvhich, as Nicod obserueth, properlie signifies an Elder or presbiter: though after the masse vvas vnderstood to be a Sacrifice, offered by the hand of presbiters, the name prestre or preist remained, but vvas also corruptly applied to a Sacrificer or Masse preist, & in time vvas only taken in that sense both in France, and elsvvhere. VVherein vve may answere vvith our Sauiour, from the beginning, it vvas not so: but a Preist, that was a Presbiter or Elder: therfore throughout the vvhole book of God, vvhere there is any speech of those orders of Aarons Sons, that vvaited at the Altar, the french Protestants do not in their Bibles translate it preist, but Sacrificer: & blame vs that vvee do not the like, to distinguish them & all massemongers from the presbiters or priests ordained in the nevv Testament. Indeede Reuel. 1. Christ is said to make vs kings & *Hiereis, Sacrificers*, vvhere you haue the same vvord that in the Septuagint, and in the Gospell is put for the Ievvish Sacrificers: but this is by Iohn mysticallie applied to all true Christians, and is not here *Presbuterois*, Presbiters, but a vvord far different, and therefore can not be vnderstood of the office, and ministrie of the Presbyters

Act. 13. chap. 14. 21, 22, 23.

Nicod. Dictionar. French and Latin.

ordained by the Apoſtles. In the newe Teſtament mention
Act. 15. 2. 4. 6. is oft made of theſe Preſbyters or Elders. Paul, Barnabas, and others were ſent to Ieruſalem *vnto the Apoſtles, and Elders:*
verſ. 22. vvhen they came thither. *They vvere receiued of the church, and of the Apoſtles and Elders. And the Apoſtles, and Elders*
Act. 16. 4. *came together, to conſider of this matter. Then it pleaſed the*
chap. 20. 17. 18. &c. *Apoſtles, and Elders, vvith the vvhole church. And vvrote letters, The Apoſtles, and Elders, and brethren ſend greeting. They deliuered them, the decrees that vvere ordained of the Apoſtles, and Elders. From Miletus he ſent to Epheſus, & called the Elders of the church:* and ſaid vnto them, *ye know from the firſt daie*
verſ. 28. *that I came into Aſia &c. Take heede therefore vnto your ſelues, and to all the flock ouer vvhich the holy Ghoſt hath made you Biſhops, to feede the church of God.* The new tranſlation reads it *Ouerſeers*, but the vvord is *Epiſcopus*, Biſhops, the ſame, that is vſed 1. Tim. 3. *A Biſhop muſt be blameleſſe &c.* Indeede both there, and here it may be tranſlated a Biſhop, or an Ouerſeer. For in the original, as a Preſbiter is an Elder, ſo a Biſhop is an Ouerſeer. But marke he ſaith to the Preſbyters, *Take heede to all the flock ouer vvhich the holy Ghoſt hath made you Biſhops* to feede, &c. VVhence it is infalliblie plaine 1.
Ioh. 16. That the Preſbiterall gouernment is the expreſſe ordinance of the holy Ghoſt, *vvho changeth* not: and of vvhome Chriſt
Heb. 13. ſaith, *He ſhall not ſpeake of himſelfe: for he ſhall take of mine & ſhew vnto you.* Novv Chriſt *is yeſterdaie, and to daie, and the ſame alſo for euer.* This ordinance is therefore vnalterable.
2. That Elders by Chriſts ordinance are, or ought to be, ouer euery congregation. Take heede to *all the flock* ouer vvhich
Act 14 23 the holy Ghoſt hath made you Biſhops. So Paul and Barnabas *ordained them Elders in euerie church* by election, & Paul
Tit. 1. 5. ſaith to Titus, *I left thee in Creete, to ſet in order the things that are vvanting, & ordaine Elders in euerie citie, as I had appointed thee.* For a vvhole prouince, or dioceſſe is to greate a

flock

flock for one man, he can not take heede to all the flock, as the Elders of one church may.

3. That their office is to feede the flock, & church of God, vvhich one man can not doe in a vvhole Dioceſſe, & vvhen they haue occaſion to binde or looſe, to reproue, correct, or comfort, to excommunicate, or reſtore, that muſt alſo be by the vvord: for it is he that in iuſt cauſes giues them authority, themſelues are not *Lords of Gods heritage*, as S Peter ſaith, to doe it at their ovvne pleaſure, by their ovvne rules, and traditions, but * *vvith the power of Christ*. For he *ſmites the earth, vvith the rod of his mouth*. 1. Pet. 5. 3 *1. Cor. 5. 4

4. That the holy Ghoſt hath made the Preſbiters Biſhops ouer the flock. For the vvords are peremptorie, Take heede to your ſelues, & to all the flock, ouer vvhich the holy Ghoſt hath made you Biſhops: there vvere diuers Elders of the church of Epheſus & the places that bordered neer it, as of that of Philippi, or Ieruſalem Act. 21. 18. to them all Paul ſaith, The holy Ghoſt hath made you biſhops, to feede the church. So Phil. 1. To all the ſaints vvhich are at Philippi vvith the Biſhops & Deacons: that is, vvith the Elders, preſbiters, and deacons: for ye ſee the preſbiters are biſhops: or othervviſe you muſt graunt, that there vvere more biſhops then one in a citie: therefore Theodore vvell vnderſtands it of the preſbiters: vvhich Bellarmine, obſeruing can not denie, but that there alſo preſbiters are called Biſhops. VVhich is yet more cleere by that to Titus, *I left thee in Creete, that thou ſhouldeſt ordaine preſbiters in euerie citie, if any be blameleſſe, the huſband of one vvife, haueing faithfull children, not accuſed of riot or vnrulie for a biſhop*, (that is the Preſbiter before mentioned) *muſt be blameleſſe, &c.* All vvhich places are ſo cleare that Bellarmine confeſſeth, that in them all the preſbiters are called Biſhops, & conſequently, that the Trent fathers erred, vvho vvould proue, that Dioceſſan Biſhops are inſtituted by Phil. 1. 1. Bellar. de Clericis l. 4 c. 14. Tit. 1. 5, 6, 7 Vbi ſupra.

Hiſtor. of the councel of Trent. pag. 597. 598. engliſh.

Chriſt and ſuperiour to Preſbyters *iure diuino*, becauſe Paul ſaith, *Take heede to all the flock ouer vvhich the holy Ghoſt hath made you Biſhops:* vvhich by his ovvne confeſſion is ſpoken to Preſbyters: therefore he anſvvers to all the three places verrie poorely, *that in thoſe daies, theſe names Biſhop & Preſbyter vvere common to all preiſts*, as if Phil. 1. vvith the Biſhops and deacons, the ſenſe muſt be thus, *VVith the Preiſts & theire miniſters the deacons:* vvhich is a vveake ſhift of a Ieſuit and ſo learned a Cardinal. For did the Apoſtle call the preſbyters, Biſhops in all theſe three places, & ſay the holy Ghoſt had made them Biſhops ouer the flocke, & yet are they not ſo? And if it vvere then a name ſo common to all preiſts, why ſhould it novv be thus reſtrained to one in a countie or prouince? and he accounted an hetetick, that vvith the holy Ghoſt affirmeth, the preſbiters to be Biſhops, as in theſe three places?

1. Tim. 3. And therefore out of all doubt, vvhen Paul ſaith, *If any man deſire the office of a Biſhop, he deſireth a good vvorke, &c.* That is the office of a preſbiter or Elder, vvho is a Biſhop, & that ſo he addeth, *Theſe things vvrite I unto thee, that thou mighteſt know how thou* (a Biſhop or preſbiter) *oughteſt to behaue thy ſelfe.* Othervviſe he vvould not haue paſſed, as he doth from the duty of a Biſhop to the duty of a deacon: but rather firſt from the duty of a Biſhop to the duty of a preſbiter or paſtor, that is, if it had not beene one and the ſame office, ſomtime ſet forth vnder the name of an Elder or preſbiter, & ſomtime of a Biſhop, as in that to Titus before alleadged (vvhich ſhevves vs that vvhen it is ſaid of Titus, that he vvas *ordained the firſt Biſhop of the Cretians*, that muſt needes be the firſt preſbiter, & ſo Timothie. (2. Tim. in fin.) vvhich in effect is acknovvledged by *Chryſoſ.* in his Comentarie on that chapter to Timothie, vvho, though he liued in a time vvhen canons, cuſtom, and cloaked ambition had made a litle

Tit. 1. 5. 6. 7.

Chriſoſt. in 1. Tim. 3.

differences

difference, saith, *There is almost no difference betweene a Bishop and a presbyter, seeing the care of the church is also graunted to the presbyters: surely by giuing of orders only they are their superiours, & herein they only seeme to be more then the presbiters.* Bellarmin acknowledgeth that Primasius, Theophilact and Oecumenius, in their Comentaries vpon the same place do teach the same thing, & almost in the same words. Wherin they come but litle short of that, which is more plainly affirmed by Hierom, on the first of Titus. *A presbiter and a Bishop is one and the same thing: and before by the instinct of the deuil, factions were made in religion, and it was said among the people: I am of Paul, I of Apollo & I of Cephas, the churches were gouerned by the common consent of the presbiters: but after euery one thought those which he had baptised to be his, not Christs, it was ordained in all the world, that one chosen from among the presbiters should be set ouer the rest, unto whome all the care of the church should pertaine, and the seedes of Sbhismes should be taken away.* And a litle lower, *As therfore presbiters know themselues to be subiect by the custome of the church to him that is set ouer them, so let the Bishops know, it is rather by the custom of the church, then by any disposition of the diuine truth, that they are greater then the presbiters, and that the church ought to be gouerned in commune.* Bellarmin doth not only cite these places thus, but confesseth farther that Hierō. hath the like things in his 85. Epistle to Euagrius. Yet he would faine haue it thought that Hierō. held a Bishop to be greater then a presbiter *iure diuino*: contenting himselfe, for lack of a better, to take that for a sufficient proofe, where he saith to Euagrius, *what doth the Bishop, giueing of orders excepted, which the presbiter may not also doe?* whereas indeede this doth rather proue the contrarie, namely that presbiters had decisiue voices in councels, might excommunicate, or doe any thing else in their flocks, belonging to gouernment, saue

Bellar. de clericis, l. 4. c. 14.

Hieron. in Tit. 1.

Vbi supra.

the giuing of orders, this beeing all the difference of power and authority, the Biſhops had them gained.

VVherein you muſt needes vnderſtand him as before, that it is rather by the cuſtome of the church, then any diſpoſition of the diuine truth, that they were herein greater then the Elders: the ſame or the like humain ordinance & cuſtom, vvhich reſtrained the title of a Biſhop to one in a Dioceſſe, vvhich before vvas common to all preſbiters, gaue him alſo the ſole povver of giuing of orders, vvhich before belonged to preſbiters in common, as is cleere by that, *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, vvhich vvas giuen thee by propheſie, vvith the laying on of the hands of the preſbiterie.* Kemnitius therefore doth vvell obſerue here, that a Biſhop may be ordained by Preſbiters, therefore there is no difference betvveene a Biſhop and a preſbiter. Bellarmin hereat offended anſvvers vvith the Greekes verie vveakely, *By the preſbiterall name, they vnderſtood the quire or companie of the preſbiters, that is of the Biſhops, vvhich laide their hands on the new biſhop.* They that laied their hands on him vvere preſbiters, but that is (ſay Bellarmin and others) Biſhops. So ſaith S. Paul, and ſo ſay vvee, preſbiters are biſhops. Indeed Bellarmin and the Greekes, do rather meane the biſhops vvere preſbiters; but it is as true the preſbiters are biſhops, and that the loue of proffit or preeminence, or mens care to ſaue the honour of their church, and cuſtoms, haue blinded many, that they can not ſee a thing ſo cleere, that by impoſition of hands of the preſbiterie, he was made a preſbiter, that is a biſhop. VVhere vvee muſt vnderſtand, that they only laide their hands on thoſe that vvere choſen by voices or hands. For it is ſaid, *They ordained them* Elders *by ſuffrages*, as Beza obſerueth out of the Greeke vvord VVhich *commeth from a cuſtome of the Greeks, vvho gaue their ſuffrages, by holding vp their hands.* And, ſaith he, *the force of this vvord Keirotoneſantes, is to be obſerued, that vvee may know, that Paul and Barnabas did nothing of a priuate*

1. Tim. 4. 14.

Vbi ſupra.

Act. 14. 23. Beza annot

priuate vvill, neither excerciſed any tirannie in the church, like that vvhich is vſed by the Romiſh harlot, or her pages, vvhich they call ordinaries. So as he ſhevveth, vvas *the gift of propheſie, giuen to Timothie vvith the laying on of the hands of the Preſbiters.* And thus is that to be vnderſtood, *lay hands ſodainlie on noe man, &c. that is doe not, vvhat in thee lieth, ſodainlie to admit any man to any* Eccleſiaſticall fũction, *for neither did all authoritie reſide in the power of Timothie alone, but the Election vvas made by the ſuffrages of the vvhole church, as vvee ſaid on* Act. 14. 23. *and as is cleere by the election of Mathias, and of the deacons, & laſtlie by this that vvith the laying on of the hands of the Preſbiterie, the man choſen vvas conſecrated to the Lord,* as 1. Tim 4. 14. By theſe places, as he ſhevveth, is that of Titus to be expounded, *That thou ſhouldeſt ordaine them* Elders, that is *by ſuffrages,* as Act. 14. 23. *by which place you may vnderſtand vvhy he addeth,* as I had appointed thee, ſee alſo 1. Tim. 5. 22. For *in the choice of Mathias, nothing is carried by Peter, as by one endued with more excellent dignitie but by the ſuffrages of the vvhole church,* there aſſembled: It is ſaid: They appointed tvvo. So for deacons the Apoſtles ſaid: *Looke ye out among you ſeauen men, &c.* then it is added. *And the ſaying pleaſed the vvhole multitude, And they choſe Steuen, &c. And ſet them before the Apoſtles, & vvhen they had praied, they laid their hands on them.* Therefore lay hands ſodainly on no man, that is till he be vvell, & aduiſedly choſen, & praiers be made vvith faſting. VVhich is ſpoken to all preſbiters in his perſon, & eſpecially to himſelfe, as beeing both a preſbiter & an Euangeliſt, vvhich is greater. And thus indeede Paul left Titus to *ordaine them preſbiters in euerie citie,* that is by ſuffrages, as he had done Act. 14. 25. Othervviſe Titus ſhould ſeeme to haue had an office like that, vvhich the papalins in Trent chalenged for the Pope, to be a biſhop of biſhops, that other biſhops ſhould receiue inſtitutiõ & iuriſdictiõ frõ him.

Idem Annota. in 1. Tim. 4. 14.

Idem in cap. 5. 22.

Idem in Tit. 1.

Idem in Act. 1.

Act. 6. 3.

Tit. 1. 5. 7.

Hiſtor. of the counc. of Trent. pag. 611.

For

For theſe preſbiters are called Biſhops verſ. 7. but this maketh not Titus a preſbiter of preſbiters, that is a Biſhop of Biſhops, much leſſe doth it giue it to any other or infer that he muſt haue one to ſuccede him in ſuch office.

1. Tim. 5. 19. *Vbi ſupra

It is obiected that Paul ſaith, againſt a preſbiter, *receiue not an accuſation, but before two or three vvitneſſes.** VVhere ſaith Bellarmin, vve ſee a Biſhop, in the *time of the Apoſtles, the Iudge of the preſbiters: therefore their true prince & ſuperiour.*

Mat. 20, 25

I anſvver this can not be 1. Becauſe Chriſt ſaith to his Diſciples, *ye know that the Prince of the Gentiles exerciſes dominion oner them, and they that are greate exerciſe authoritie vpon them, But it ſhall not be ſo among you.* And S. Peter ſaith to the preſbiters, *take the ouerſight of the flock, not as beeing Lords ouer Gods* heritage: much leſſe as Lords ouer other preſbiters, for that vvere to make one a Biſhops of Biſhops, or the Pope of a prouince. 2. That Timothie vvas the firſt preſbiter or Biſhop in that church, and not only an Euangeliſt, vvhich is greater, but a man of exterordinarie gifts: therfore S. Paul vvrites to him an Elder, vvhat courſe he and all Elders are to take, if any of their number be accuſed before them, as he ſaith, *that thou mightest knovv hovv to behaue thy ſelfe, &c.*

1. tim. 5. 15

For all the Elders vſed to meete in ſuch greate caſes: and oft times other brethren alſo of the congregation Act. 15. 6. 20.

1. cor. 5. 4. Mat. 18. 17

23. Paul ſaith to the Corinthians *vvhen ye are gathered together, and my ſpirit vvith the power of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, deliuer ſuch a one unto Satan.* In vvhich ſenſe Chriſt ſaith, *If he ſhall neglect to heare tvvo or three, tell it to the church: but if he neglect to heare the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen.*

Act. 20.

And Paul bids the preſbyters to take *heede to themſelues*, and to all the flocke ouer vvhich the holy Ghoſt had made them Biſhops: for of *your owne ſelues ſhall men ariſe ſpeaking Peruerſe* things: ſomtime the deuill may bring an Elder to that vvickednesſe, and then ye ſee the other Elders are the

Biſhops

Biſhops that are to looke to it, and reforme it, that office is not giuen to one in a dioceſſe. For as *the Spirits of the Prophets are ſubiect to the Prophets*. So the Spirits of the Elders muſt in ſuch cases be ſubiect to the Elders. VVheras if a Biſhop fall into ſuch faults like the *Appealer*, he vvill be ſubiect to none: vvho dare taſke him? you vvill ſay the Archbiſhop: but if the Archbiſhop be corrupt and mightie in court, vvho dare once taxe him? The Pope. Adde he can not erre, or all is nothing. Such an endles labarinth, followes this humaine inuention of dioceſſan, and prouinciall Biſhops: vvhich hath and doth make vvickednes abound, becauſe it hath not ſo good meanes to ſtay and repreſſe it, as the Elderſhip hath: vvhich vvas ordained for that end, not by man but by God himſelfe. God hath ſet ſome in the church firſt Apoſtles, ſecondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers then miracles, the gifts of healing, helpers, Gouernors, &c. theſe laſt are tvvo diſtinct offices as Ar. Montan, Beza, and others reade them, * vnderſtanding the helpers to be deacons, that helped the poore & ſick And Gouernours to declare the order of the preſbyters, vvho vvere keepers of the diſcipline of the church, as vvee ſaid elſvvhere. To vvhom then belongeth the Gouernment, but to thoſe that God hath ſet in the church? Novv vvee can reade of no others that he ſet to gouerne, beſides the Apoſtles and Euangeliſt, but preſbyters. Hath God then ſet them for Gouernours in the church, & vvill men preſume to ſupplant them, and ſet others? Dare men ſay that the gouernment, by dioceſſan Biſhops, ordained by men is better then this of Elders, ordained by God? To vvhome indeede God muſt needes giue a better bleſſing, as beeing his ovvne ordinance, he hath ſet them in the church. Neither doth that proue the contrarie, becauſe in Amſterdam, and ſom other cities of Holland, there are many Religions: for neither Biſhops, if they had ſuch, nor Elders can hinder it, if the pollicie ſuffer

1. Cor. 14. 31.

1. Cor. 12. 28.

Beza. Annot. in hoc lec.

them. But looke into the reformed churches there, in France, and elſvvhere, and you ſhall finde them better gouerned: and much better vvould be, if ſom burgers to enritch themſelues, and get places of authority, or a league, & trade vvith Spaine, did not vvaxe negligent in religion, and for ſuch ends turne Arminians and nevvters. If an Apoſtle vvere novv liuing, and ſhould vvrite an Epiſtle to Mr. Moulin paſtor and Elder in Sedan: *Againſt an Elder receiue not an accuſation vnder two or there vvitneſſes*, that vvould not argue, that he vvere ouer other Paſtors and Elders in the prouince; nor as a Lord in his ovvne congregation: but rather vvhat vvere his duty, yea the duty of all Elders aſſembled in ſuch a caſe.

The Apoſtle recounting all the officers, and Gouernours
Ephes. 4. of the church, ſaith, He gaue ſome Apoſtles: and ſome Prophets: and ſome Paſtors, and Teachers: vvhere he neither names Biſhops nor Elders, much leſſe both, as tvvo diſtinct callings, becauſe the Paſtor by his place vvas a Preſbiter, and ſo a Biſhop properlie, & the deacons had the care of the Almes. In ſuch a church, as that of Epheſus or Philippi, there vvere diuers, vvho vvere teachers and helpers, but one vvho vvas ſomevvhat more properlie the Paſtor, and ſo the biſhop of that flock: therefore though the charge go to all the Elders,
Reuel. 2. *Take heede to your ſelues, and to all the flocke, &c.* yet this is ſomvvhat more eſpeciallie applied to him that is paſtor, and ſo the firſt Elder or biſhop. *Vnto the Angel of the church of Epheſus* vvrite, that is to the paſtor. Euen as in the church of Paris at this day, vvhich is one congregation, of about ſix thouſand communicants, there are three preachers, vvho are all Elders to feede the flock, yet one of them is reckoned the paſtor, & the other tvvo helpers: the like in Diepe, and diuers other cities, vvhere they liue amõg perſecuting Papiſts, as the old Chriſtians did among the heathen: hauing but one congregation or flock in a citie. In ſome leſſer cities, or vvhere there

there are fevver proteſtants, there is only a paſtor vvith lay Elders. And thus out of all doubt, it vvas in the primatiue church, till after the death of the Apoſtles, vvho ordained Elders in euerie church, and citie, vvhere one vvas the paſtor, yet in matter of gouernment, all the Elders of a church ruled together, by commõ conſent: euen in Ieruſalem things were not done vvithout the Elders, but the decrees vvent out in all their names. VVhen Paul vvent laſt to Ieruſalem, there vvere diuers vvith him: But, ſaith Luke, Paul *vvent in vvith vs to Iames, & all the Elders vvere preſent.* The Apoſtle would doe nothing vvithout them. Therefore Paul ſaith, *Let the Elders that rule vvell be counted vvorthy of double honour, eſpectiallie they vvho labour in the vvord & doctrine.* VVhence alſo ſom collect, that there vvere ſom Elders, that vvere not miniſters, but lay-men of the more vnderſtãding, & beſt gouerned ſort. Howſoeuer, ye ſee they had all ſhare in the gouernment vvere it vvith Timothie, Titus, or vvhoſoeuer. For theſe vvere not greater then the Apoſtles, vvhich vvas the higheſt calling in the church: yet euen vvith them in Ieruſalem, there vvere Elders, as it vvere in ioynt commiſſion for matter of gouernment: they themſelues tooke on them this office, & diſdained not to be reckoned vvith other preſbiters. Peter ſaith, The *preſbiters vvhich are among you, I exhort, vvho am alſo *Sumpreſbuteros* a fellovv preſbiter: and Iohn, that might haue ſaid, The Apoſtle, chooſeth rather to ſay, *The Elder to the elect ladie, The * Preſbiter to the vvelbeloued Gaius.*

Act. 14. Tit. 1. 5.

Act. 21. 18.

1. Tim. 5. 17.

1. Pet. 5. 1. * or Elders. 2. Ioh. * or Elder.

None of the Apoſtles are in the nevv Teſtament called biſhops, but preſbiters, becauſe a preſbiter vvas a biſhop, & then a name of no leſſe honour, but rather of greater, beeing. Indeed one and the ſame paſtorall office in euerie congregation, it vvas the higheſt in the church next the Apoſtles, Euangeliſts, and paſtors, the Elders beeing the officers, vvhich God had appointed to gouern his church to the vvorlds end.

The holy Ghoſt ſaith not Biſhops, leaſt afterward it ſhould haue bene take for dioceſſan Biſhops but Elders. Neither doth Iohn ſet the Pope, or any Biſhop, but Chriſt among them, as their only head, for chap. 5. *Chriſt ſtandeth in the midſt of the throne, and in the midſt of the Elders*, to ſhewe they truly belong to his gouernment, as dioceſſan Biſhops, ſo that of Antichriſt It was ſtoutly defended in the councell of Trent, that they held, of the Pope & not immediately of God. True not ſo rightly as the Elders doe: nor yet in a manner ſo litle diſſenting as the firſt dioceſſan Biſhops did, as we ſhall further ſee in the ſequel: therfore they are not ſo truly of Gods kingdome, but rather of a contrarie, For indeede *There is no power but of God: The powers that be are ordained of God.* Whence it followes, that all powers, much more thoſe that gouerne the church, muſt be ordained of God, or elſe they be not lawfull. Now this can not be ſaid of the Pope and Cardinals nor of Dioceſſan, Biſhops: for theſe were not ordained of God, but of men. Ergo &c. They are indeede againſt Elders which are the powers ordained of God. *Whoſoeuer therefore reſiſteth theſe powers, reſiſteth the ordinance of God.* One of the Elders ſpeakes to Iohn concerning the Martirs, that ſuffered in the ten perſecutions, ſignified by thoſe troubles that followed the opening of the ſeauen ſeales, then paſt & gone. And though whilſt the woman, the true Church fled, and remained in the wildernes from Antichriſtian tirannie and ſuperſtition, their gouernment muſt needes be hid, and perſecuted with her: yet when the Goſpell is reſtored, the Temple of God opened, & diuers *kingdoms of this world, became the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt*, the Elders worſhip & giue thanks: as alſo when Babilon is deſtroied: & hereupon it is ſaid: *The Lord God omnipotent reigneth:* that is in his word and ordinances. Elders are then reſtored, whereas before ſhe & her traditions, & hierarchie gouerned churches

Hiſtor. of the concell of Trent. pag. 599. & 613.

Rom. 13. 1.

Reuel. 7.

Reuel. 11.

chap. 19. 4. 5. 6.

churches. For in that they are euer thus about the throne, on Seates, both before & after Babilon is destroied, this sheweth that they are the only spirituall Rulers, ordained by God; to gouerne his church vnder Christ, to the vvorlds end, and by him set about his throne, as those vvhich by his ordinance haue had the *Ecclesiasticall* gouernment, ought still to haue it by the furtherance of Christian kings, and princes, that are nursing fathers, and in Gods good time shall haue it againe. Christ vvilbe in the midst of the Elders. Both that of the Bishop of Rome, and of all other diocessian, and prouinciall Bishops, shall be ouerthrovven: and then of *the increase of his gouernment, and peace there shall be no ende*, but he vvill put all things in subiection *vnder his feete*. VVhich all as vvell high as lovv, should endeauour to knovv, that knovving it, vvhen in praier they say, thy kingdome come, in heart they may both pray, that God vvould send it, and vse the best meanes they can to effect it.

Isa 9.7. Heb. 2.8.

By all vvhich is manifest, that the Presbiters, vvere the Bishops and Gouernours of the church, in the time of the Apostles, & a vvhile after: and that the preeminence, vvhich after some one in a prouince obtained, vvas by consent and custome, & not by authoritie of Scripture. VVhich is ingeniously acknovvledged by S. Austin. *For although according to the termes of honour, vvhich now the vse of the church hath obtained, a Bishop vvhich is greater then the Presbiterie, neuertheless, Austin is in many things lesse then* Hierom, Note those vvords, vvhich now the custom of the church hath obtained, he saith not vvhich is giuen in the nevv Testamēt. Ambrose saith, *that of old the antienter Presbiters, vvere called bishops, that the eldest dying, the next might succeede him: but because the following presbiters, began to be found vnworthy to hold the primacie, the reason vvas changed vvisdome foreseeing that not order but merrit should make a bishop, he vvas ordained by the*

August. in Epist. 19. ad Hibron. quæ iam Ecclesiæ vsus obtinuit. Ambros. comment. in cap. 4. ad Ephes. Bellar. de clericis l. 4. cap. 4.

choice of manie preists. VVhence vvee see, that the litle primacie, & authoritie the bishop had in his time gained, vvas not obtained all at a time, but by degrees: vvherin things had bene still altered. VVich Bellarmin vvould faine denie, but can not: striuing to make nothing of these, & al other proofes: vvithout daring to taske these fathers of heresie: vvhich yet he boldly fattens on Calvin, Kemnitius, and others for holding the same things, and producing these proofes. Caluin, saith he, speakes thus, *Such as to vvhome the duty of teaching vvas enioined, vvere named presbiters, they out of their number in diuers cities, choose one to vvhom they specially gaue the title of a bishop, least out of equalitie, as it is vvont to be, discords should arise: yet vvas not the bishop so the superiour in dignitie, and honour, that he should haue lordship ouer his collegues: but looke vvhat priueleidges a Consull hath in the Senate, to make report of the buisnesses, that by aduising, warning, & perswading he may preceede others, gouern the vvhole action by his authoritie, and put in execution that, vvhich is determined by common consent: the same office had the bishop in the companie of the presbiters: and that this verie thing vvas brought in for the necessitie of the time by humaine consent, the ancient fathers themselues confesse it, ye haue heard their testimonie.* Against this Bellarmin for lack of better proofes alleadgeth the Acts of the Councell of Trent, vvherein the bishops vvere iudges in their ovvne cause, as they had euer beene since the Councell of Nice.

Bellar. de clericis lib 4. cap. 14.

Caluin. l. 4 Instit. c. 4.

Vbi supra.

In Trent it vvas alleadged *that the Augustin confession put noe difference betweene a bishop, and a preist, but by humaine constitution, and affirmed the superioritie of bishops vvas first by custome, and after by Ecclesiasticall constitution.* VVhich those Trent fathers vvould faine haue disproued, but could not. For though in the age after the Apostles, custome had brought in a kinde of diocesan bishops to preside in Synods, yet

Histor. of the Counc. of Trent. pag. 606.

yet in other reſpects, they vvere reckoned among other preſ- Euſeb. hiſt. Eccleſiaſt. lib. 5. c. 22, biters, till about the yeere 195. vvhen Victor preſbiter or biſhop of Rome, tooke on him to excommunicate the chur- 23, 24. ches of Aſia, about the feaſt of Eaſter, and for it, as Euſebius ſhevveth, vvas reproued by ſundrie biſhops: among the reſt by Ireneus in an Epiſtle to Victor. *The Preiſts*, ſaith he, *vvhich before Soter preſided in that church, vvhich you novv gouerne, namely, Anicetus, Pius, Higinus, Teleſphorus, and Xiſtus, neither obſerued that day themſelues, nor ſuffered others to obſerue it, yet they kept peace with others that did:* vvhere note he calleth them not biſhops but Preiſts, notvvithſtanding the eminen- *or preſbi- cie of that church, and the cuſtome of preſiding among other preſbiters, as a kinde of dioceſſan: becauſe a preſbiter vvas a biſhop. Againe, *But the preiſt vvhich vvere before you ſent vnto them, &c.* So fared *it betweene* Policarpus, and Anicetus the prieſt, that is the biſhop of Rome. It is true that after this proud and raſh act of Victor, the biſhop of Rome grevv greater, & the name of a biſhop came to be more reſtrained to thoſe that liued in greate cities, and preſided in Synods: as alſo by that act of Steuen biſhop of Rome, vvho attempted to reſtore Baſilides & Martialis tvvo biſhops of Spaine about the yeere 250. And as Monſieur du Pleſſes obſerueth * in the *Myſter. of Iniquit. councell held at Rome vnder Sylueſter an. 324. *the Preiſts ſtood behind the place vvhere the biſhops ſate.* And in the con- cell of Nice, held the yere after, the 6. canon is read in theſe Concil. Nicen. 1. words, *let the ancient cuſtomes be obſerued, vvhich are in Egipt, can. 6. 7. Lybia, & Pentapolis, ſo that the biſhop vvhich is in Alexandria haue authoritie ouer all theſe, becauſe ſuch alſo is the manner or cuſtome of the biſhop of Rome.* VVhich is but a vveake autho- ity for prouincial biſhops, ſeeing the canon confeſſeth, that had beene only a thing of cuſtom: vvheras if it had bene an Apoſtolick inſtitution, the concell vvould rather haue alled- ged that. Mounſieur du * Pleſſes proues that many of the *Vbi ſupra. Ancient call it a cuſtome.

Other

Cyprian. l. de lapsis. Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 1.

Other things aduanced this dignity, & the vvrath of God for it. Cyprian yealdeth this reason of the persecution of *Decius*, *because euerie man slept in the coueteous desires of his owne heart.* VVhich he shevveth in the clergie. Eusebius giues a like reason of the succeeding persecutiō of Diocletian. *There vvas*, saith he, *amongst vs nought els, but cursed speakings, & continuall iarres of prelates, falling out vvith Prelates, & congregations vvith congregations: They also vvhich seemed to be pastors, casting of this law, and rule of pietie kindled contentions betweene themselues, seeking only to increase debates, threats, iealousies, heart burnings and reuenge, vvith an immoderate desire to command and sway, as in a Tyrannie.* It is easie to conceiue, that vvhen peace and plentie came in, all things vvould vvaxe vvorse. Constantine to bring his people to Christianitie, as he pulled dovvne Idolatrie, to he applied the reuenues of their Temples, to the maintenance of the Christian churches: and besides gaue them other great gifts: his greatest Princes, beeing conuerted, did the like, as appeareth in the life of Sylvest, and by Cedranus his Historie. S Hierom, complaineth of Preists that vvrunge *rewards from ladies, and from others. Others there are, vvho spend their vvhole times in learning the names, houses, and qualities of these ladies.* Ovid in another place, There be Clerks, vvhich possesse more vnder poore Christ, then erst they did vnder the rich diuell. This contagion spread so far, that the Emperours, Valentinian, Valens & Gratian, made lavves against it, *prohibiting Clergie men to set foote vvithin the doores of vvidowes, or Orphans to receiuee gifts by Testament, &c.* VVith plentie came in corruption in life and religion. Baronius confesseth that men at that time hallovved heathenish rites & ceremonies, by bringing them into christian churches: That Constantine ordained, *That the bishops of the Christian lavve, should thence forvvard haue the same priueleidges, vvhich the idolatrous preists had*

Anno 330. Damasus & Anastas. in vita Sylvest.

Cedrenus pag. 243. Hieron. ad Eustich. Epist. 22. Ad Nepotian, 2. In Cod. Theodos.

Baro. To 1. art. 44. art. 38. &c. To. 3. art. 524. art. 78. & 79.

had enioied. That the *Pagan preists had a chiefe among them, Rex Sacrificulus, and their soueraigne Pontife, arbitrator of all questions among them.* And vvho, saith he, can thinke, *that Constantine vvould long endure, that these should exceed the Christians* in pompe and glory? then he proues the Pope and Cardinals to haue the like glory in riding, clothing, salutations, and crovvning. VVhich is to shevv the Pope in habit of a pagan. Thus vvhile dioceſſan Biſhops vvere ordained, to vvithstand diuiſions, on the contrarie they vvere increaſed thereby, as appeares by the reaſons Cyprian, & Euſebius giue of the perſecutions, & others about the feaſt of Eaſter, appeales, pride & errours, in ſuch as was Paulus Semoſareneus, Arrius, Neſtorius, & others, by whoſe great names groſſe errours were receiued, & propagated. Cõſtantine, *by reaſon of sũdry diſſentions which he ſaw daily to ariſe betwene biſhops, aſſembled Synods.* Euſeb. de vit. Conſtant. lib. 1. c. 37. & 38.

Novv to ſee more exactly hovv from ſo ſmall beginnings biſhops came to the greate power, they haue, vvee may finde it proued in the hiſtorie of the councell of Trent: That at firſt the churches were gouerned by the common councell of the preſbitery, and how after to withſtand diuiſions, the monarchicall gouernment was inſtituted giuing ſuperintendency to the biſhop. The neighbour biſhops, whoſe churches becauſe they were vnder one prouince had commerce, did gouerne themſelues alſo by Synods: and to make the gouernment more eaſy, attributing much to the Biſhop of the principall citie, they made him as it were head of that body: and ſo the Biſhop of the citie, where the Ruler did reſide, gained a certaine ſuperiority by cuſtome. Theſe prefectures were the Imperiall citie of Rome; the prefecture of Alexandria, which gouerned Egypt, Libia, and Pentapolis: of Antioch for Syria, and other Prouinces of the Eaſt. This gouernment, brought in & approued by cuſtom only, was eſtabliſhed by the firſt councell of Nice. The Pope had no other ground of his greatnes, ſaue this, and the tranſlation of the ſeate of the Empire from Rome to Conſtantinople, till about the yeere 607. vvhen he obtained of Phocas, that murdered his maſter, to be called vniuerſall Biſhop, vvhich title, vvas a litle before proued to be Anti-chriſtian, by his Predeceſſor Gregorie, 1. The inundation of the Gothes, and Vandals had eclipſed his glorie, and ſo did Hiſt. of the counc. of Trent pag. 226. Guiciard.

the Exarchs of Rauenna, till the Lombards, hauing gotten that Exarchat, & long oppressed all Italie, Pipin chased them avvay, and gaue this part to the Bishop, & church of Rome: vvhich vvas confirmed by his Sonne Charles, that vtterlie rooted the Lombards out, and vvas by the Pope crovvned Emperour: yet the Popes vvere subiect to him, till his posteritie grovving vveake, seuen Electors vvere ordained, and the Imperiall povver, being translated to the Germans, and noe longer hereditarie, vvas much diminished, and that of the Popes thereby increased, especially, after they obtained of the Emperour Henry the second, that the Cardinals only should choose the Pope, and then the Cardinals also vvaxed great.

If this shevv not hovv bishops, but rather hovv the Pope grevv greate, it is supplied by another discourse in the Historie of the councell of Trent, vvhere it being considered, in vvhat cases Christ saith, Tell the church, and vvhat povver is giuen to a congregation, in that place to the Corinthians, vve may see hovv things vvere carried after dioceſſan Bishops vvere thus ordained. The iudgment of the church (as is necessary in euery multitude) was first, that it should be conducted by one, who should preside, and guide the action. This care, due to the most principall, and worthy person was alwaies committed to the Bishop. And where the churches were many, the propositions, and deliberations were made by the Bishop first in the colledge of Preists, and Deacons, which they called the Presbiterie, and there were ripened, to receiue afterward the last resolution in the generall congregation of the church. This forme was still on foote in the yeere 250. & is plainly seene by the Epistles of Cyprian, who in matter concerning those who did eate of meates offered to Idols, and subscribe to the Religion of the Gentiles, writeth to the Presbiterie, that he doth not thinke to do any thing without their counsells, & consent of the people: and writeth to the people, that, at his retourne, he will examine the causes, and merits thereof, in their presence, and vnder their iudgment: and he wrote to those Preists, who of their owne braine had reconciled some, that they should giue an account to the people. I must here referre you to the Historie it selfe, vvhich sheweth hovv this gouernment had bene defended against the Canonists, & only recite som things to shevv hovv it decaied, & hovv in the

Mat. 18. 17.

1. Cor. 5. 4.

Histor. of the concell of Trent pag. 330. to pag. 335.

the ruine thereof, that of the Biſhops increaſed; vvherein I ſtriue to much too abridge things, cõſult the with place it ſelfe for better ſatisfaction. The goodneſſe and Charitie of the Biſhops, made their opinion for the moſt part to be followed, & by title and title, was cauſe that the churches, charity waxing cold, not regarding the charge laide vpon them by Chriſt, did leaue the care to the Biſhop: and ambition, a vvitie paſſion, which doth inſinuate it ſelfe in ſhew of vertue, cauſed it to be readily embraced. But the principall cauſe of the change was the ceaſing of the perſecutions. For then the Biſhops did erect as it were a tribunall, which was much frequented: becauſe as temporall commodities, ſo ſuits did increaſe. The iudgment though differing from the former in forme, to determine all by the opinion of the church, was yet of the ſame ſincerirtie. Which Conſtantine obſerving, made a law, that there ſhould lie no appeale from the ſentences of Biſhops: and if in a cauſe depending before a ſecular tribunall, either of the parties ſhall demand Epiſcopall iudgment, the cauſe ſhalbe remitted to him. Here the tribunall of the Biſhop began to be a common pleading place. The Emperour Valence enlarging it in the yeere 365. gaue the Biſhops the care ouer all the prizes of vindible things. Which troubled Auſtin, and other good Biſhops. Afterwards ſome Biſhops beginning to abuſe the power giuen them by Conſtantine, that law was 70. yeeres after, reuoked by Arcadius, and an ordination made that they ſhould iudge cauſes of religion, and not ciuill, except both parties did conſent, and declared that they ſhould not be thought to haue a court. Which law beeing not much obſerued in Rome, in regard of the greate power of the Biſhop, Valentinian, being then in the citie, an. 452. did renew it, and made it to be put in execution. But a litle after part of the power taken away, was reſtored by the following Princes: So that Iuſtinian eſtabliſhed vnto them a court, and audience, the cauſes of Religion, Eccleſiaſticall faults of the clergie, & diuers voluntarie iuriſdictions ouer the laietie. By theſe degrees they got domination. Idem vbi ſupra.

The Empire being diuided, and kingdoms erected, the Biſhops for the moſt part were made councellors of the Prince, which by mixture of ſpirituall and temporall charges, cauſed their iuriſdiction to increaſe exceedingly. Before 200. yeeres were paſt, they pretended abſolutely all iudicature, criminall, and ciuill, ouer the Clergie, and in ſome things ouer the laietie. After the yeere 1050. All the cauſes of the Clergie beeing appropriated to the Biſhops. and verie many of the laiete, vnder the title of ſpiritualitie, and almoſt all the reſt vnder the name of a mixed iudicature, and placing themſelues aboue the ſecular Magiſtrates, vpon pretence of iuſtice denied, they came to ſay that the Biſhop, had that power to iudge, not by graunt, or conniuence of Princes, Idem pag. 332.

or by the will of the people, or by custome, but that it was essentiall to the Episcopall dignitie, and giuen it by Christ. And though the lawes of the Emperours remaine in the Codes of Theodosius and Iustinian, in the capitulars of Charles the greate, and Lewis the debonaire, and others of later Princes, which all shew, when, & by whome this power was graunted, and all Histories Ecclesiasticall, and prophane agree in the same: yet so notorious a truth hath bene ouercome, by a contrary affirmation only,
Pag. 334. without any proofe. In the councell of Trent a defect was considered, that the charitie of the superiours was turned into domination, and that thence grew appeale vpon appeale. Iohannes Groperus, who assisted there as a diuine, and a lawier, spake honourably of appeales, & said that while the heare of faith remained in the breasts of Christians, Appeales were not heard of. But charitie in the Iudges waxing cold, and place being giuen to passion, they entred into the church, for the same reasons, which brought them into the secular courts, that is, for the ease of the oppressed. And as the first iudicatures belonged not to the bishop only, but to him with the councell of his Preists, so the Appeale was not diuolued to one man, but vnto another congregation. But the Bishops taking away the Synods, did institute courts and officers, like the seculars. Neither did the mischiefe stop there, but passed to greater abuses then in the secular court. Which he shewes in that Appeale, was made from Appeale, till it came to the Pope, and sometime by a leap to him without more a doe. Iohn Baptista, Castellus vvas made to salue vp these soares, by a
Pag. 335. and 336. *cunning oration*, in the next congregation. And so, to restore Synodall iudicatures was reiected almost by all, because it did diminish the Episcopall, & was too popular. For proceeding against the persons of the Bishops, no man desiring to facilitate the iudicature against himselfe, the restoring of it to parochiall Synods, vnto which it did formerly belong, was not spoken of English Bishops in like wisdome suppresse all bookes, & Preachers that speake of the right of Elders, or of such Synods and the like things, that neither they nor their owne vsurpations, may be knowne. By all vvhich vvee may see, that it is a vveake defence, for the authoritie of Bishops, & against the Eldership, to alleadge the grant of Emperours & Kings, or as Bellarmin doth the Acts of any councell, much lesse that of Trent. Gods ordinance & vvord, should euer be of more force, & esteeme vvith true Christians, then any of this kinde vvhatsoeuer.

By these affirmations of this impartiall Author, vvhome they can not call a Brovvnist, or a Puritan, vvee may see, that they in the church of England, vvho vnderstand this clause,

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Tell the church, as if it vvere meant, tell the Biſhops, or their Officials, doe not only vvilfully vnderſtand it, as Chriſt neuer meant it, & of ſuch as he neuer ordained, but euen contrarie to the interpretation, vnderſtanding, and practiſe of the primitiue church till the time of Cyprian, that is for 250. yeers after Chriſt. VVhich ſhevves the Gouernment of Dioceſſan Biſhops, & their Officials, Chancellors, Courts, and proceedings to be popiſh, nouell, & intollerable: ſuch as make the ordinance of God of none effect, & take things vpon them, vvhich belong not to them. If a man dvvelling in the Iſle of Iereſey, in the Iſle of vvight, or in Surrey, find himſelfe much vvronged & moleſted by a neighbour, vvould *Tell the church:* ſhould he run to the Biſhop of the Dioceſſe, or to his Chancelour at VVincheſter, and not rather to the flock, and the Elders thereof, vvhereof he and the offendour are members? vvhich flock ſhould, haue the povver the church of Corinth had.

It is remarkeable, that vvhen Chriſt vvould reproue the ſeuen churches for certaine corruptions crept into them, he doth not ſay vvrite, and ſend it to the chiefe officers of the church, to the Archbiſhops, biſhops, or their officials, Chancelours, &c. For there vvere no ſuch officers then, but vvrite, and ſend it vnto the ſeuen churches, that is to the vvhole flock in Epheſus, ſo to that in Smyrna, and ſo in all the reſt. So it is ſtill added, *Let him that hath an eare, heare vvhat the Spirit ſaith to the churches.* Euerie man that vvas a member of the church muſt heare it, and take care to redreſſe it. Indeed he bids him vvrite to the Angel, that is to the Paſtor of the church of Epheſus, and ſo of the reſt, becauſe the Paſtor as the principall man, and a Preſident in the congregation, ſhould propound, and make it knovvne to the reſt, he being one vvhome it did a litle more concerne then the reſt, as he vvas Shepheard of the flock, & ſo one that ſhould looke to

Rev. 2. 11.

chap. 2. 7.

ſuch faults: yet all the Elders of euerie church, vvere alſo to looke to it, as thoſe that had ſhare in the gouernment, and things vvere determined by voices of all men, members of the church. The Epiſtles vvere vvritten to them all, as appeares alſo by that to the church of Smyrna: *the deuill ſhall caſt* Verſ. 10, 22, 23. *ſome of you into priſon. I vvill giue vnto euerie one of you according to his vvorks: And vnto you I ſay, the reſt of them of Thiatira, as many as haue not this learning, &c.* VVhen he ſaith, of ſome churches, that they had kept his name, and not denied the faith, &c. and of others that they had left *their firſt loue*, or had them vvhich *held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, of Balaam*, or the vvoman Iezabel: It is ſenſles to thinke, that only the Angel of each church is commended or taxed. The reproofes, and incitements to repentance are not to him alone, but to the church. Paul ſpeaking to the church of the Coloſſians, ſaith, *Say to Archippus,* Col. 4. 17. *Take heede to the miniſtrie, that thou haſt receiued in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.* He vvrit his Epiſtles, vvherein their are directions for gouernment, to the churches. He vvillerh the church at Rome, *to marke them vvhich cauſe* Rom. 16. 17. *diuiſions, and offences, contrarie to the doctrine they* had learned, and to auoyde them. In that greate buſines, Act. 15. the brethren vvere at the diſcuſſing of it, the decrees vvent out in all their names. *It ſeemed good to the* Act 15. 22. 23. *Apoſtles, and Elders, vvith the* vvhole church. Letters vvere vvritten *after this manner*, The Apoſtles, and Elders, Verſ. 12. and *brethren, vnto the brethren, &c.* And in that it is ſaid, *All the multitude kept ſilence, and heard* Barnabas, *&c.* All this ſhevves they had libertie to ſpeake in due time, Act. 6. 5. if they had ſeene cauſe. *The ſaying pleaſed the multitude.* This ſhevves their conſent, and that they had voices. For as Paul informed by the houſe of Cloe, that there

vvere

vvere *diuisions* among them, conuinced them as an Apostle vvith vvords, vvhich are the vvord of God: so vvhen by them, or by such others, he vvas informed of the incestious Corinthian, he conuinced them, yet he referred the censure to the church, and vvould not doe the thing himselfe, though as an Apostle he vvas a generall officer in all churches. He vvisheth them to excommunicate him: and after vvhen he had repented * to *forgiue* him. It is true that the *Keies* of binding, and loosing in this kinde, vvere principallie giuen to the Pastors: but ye see they did not excommunicate, and restore vvithout the consent of the church. 1. Cor. 2. Chap. 5. 4. * 2. Cor. 2. 7.

And yet it is not meant hereby, that this parochiall Gouernment should be ouerloaden vvith businesses: much lesse vvith friuilous contentions. For some things may be ended by the arbitration of tvvo or three neighbours, and many causes are fitter for the common lavves, and those courts vvhere the Kings Chancellour, and other Iudges sit, but only that such matters should be in the churches povver, as are fit, that the church should take care of them, and iudge them. So that this doth not ouerthrovv the authoritie of Christian Magistrates, and their courts. Neither can this be a cause of confusion, making that vvhich is all mens busines, to be no mans: so that thereupon carelesnes should arise, or pride, and contention. For vvee see, that after this manner, many things haue beene vvell discussed, and determined in the high court of Parliament, vvhere all things passe by voices: as likevvise in ciuill corporations, and common counsailes: in vvhich, things are best, and most vncorruptlie carried, vvhen men may speake their mindes freelie, and are not oueravved by such greate ones, as are the Bishops,

that

that haue powver to ſit on their ſkirts that diſpleaſe them.
Mat. 23. 8. For in this caſe men ſhould thinke of that, *One is your maſter euen Chriſt, & ye are brethren. Doe ye not know that the ſaints*
1. Cor. 3. 6. chap. 2. 15. *ſhall iudge the vvorld? He that is ſpirituall diſcerneth all things.* And thinke vvee then, that they may not as vvell be fit Iudges of manners novv, as they vvere in the Apoſtles time, and the age next after them? If it vvere once in vſe, men vvould ſoone be vvell enabled to the vvorke.

Tertull. Apol. c. 39. lib. 3. contra Epiſt. Parment. Beſides the proofes out of Cyprian aboue mentioned, Tertullian makes the officers to be only *Preſidents in the aſſemblie*: Hierom ad Demet. affirmes, that *the church it ſelfe hath right in excommunication, as the Elders haue in other church cenſures.* Auguſtin thinks that *it helpes much to the ſhaming of the partie, that he be excommunicate by the vvhole church.* Zvvinglius, Artic. 8. explanat. ſpeaking of the contention vvhich hath bene, vvhat a church is, acknovvledges no other churches, but 1. *the companie of ſure, and firme beleeuers diſperſed through the vvhole vvorld*, called the Catholick church. And 2, ſeuerall congregations vvhich *conueniently meete together in ſome one place, &c.* of theſe he affirmes Chriſt to ſpeake Mat. 18. *Tell the church.* Peter Martyr in his common places, Part. 4. chap. 5. Sect. 9 making the church a Monarchie in reſpect of Chriſt, an Ariſtocracie in reſpect of the Elders, addeth alſo, that *becauſe in the church, there are matters of greate vveight, and importance, referred vnto the people, as excommunication, abſolution, chooſing Miniſters, and the like, it hath alſo a conſideration of popular gouernment*: and vpon 1. Cor. 5. 4. *The Apoſtle, as greate as he vvas vvould not excommunicate alone, but did take counſaile vvith the church that the thing might be done by common authority. VVhich notvvithſtanding both Romiſh, & Engliſh biſhops dare doe. The Apoſtle indeede goes before the reſt, vvhich is the duty of the ancients of the church, that the more ignorant multitude, by their*

ſuffrages

ſuffrages goeing before, may be directed, iudging. Bucer affirmes, that Paul *accuſes the Corinthians, for that the vvhole church had not excommunicated the inceſtious perſons.* Baſtingius, Loc. 4. queſt. 85. of his Catechiſme, ſpeaking of the difference betvveene the tvvo keies, that of preaching, and the other of diſcipline, placeth it in this, that the former, vvhich *is of the preaching of the Goſpel, is committed to the miniſters, the other, becauſe it pertaines to the diſcipline of excommunication, is permitted to the vvhole church.* I omit that vvhich Mr. Foxe, Mr. Cartvvright, and other Engliſh men had ſaid to this purpoſe, becauſe it vvould be too long for this place. Lib 1. de regno Chriſti cap. 9.

It vvilbe obiected, that many learned Engliſh men hold better vvith the Epiſcopall gouernment. I anſvvere, the neceſſitie of conformitie, impoſed on them furniſheth them vvith arguments to that purpoſe. They knovv the Biſhops can not looke to all things neceſſarie in euerie pariſh. But, ſay they, there are church vvardens, & ſide men: They might aide vvhoſe office ſerues to litle, but to looke to the obſervation of their traditions, and ceremonies, and therefore not for the kingdome of God, but for the dominion of Biſhops: they are but a mockerie of the Elderſhip. They knovv, that if the pariſh be full of prophane Svvearers, drunkards, fornicators, extortioners, defrauders, and the like, all theſe in their turnes may come to be churchvvardens. If they be but conformable to ceremonies, and do but ſpeake vvell of the booke of common praier, though they haue no true loue to preaching, and hearing of the vvord, vvhereby, knovvledge, faith, and other graces are vvrought in the ſoule, but ſcorne, and mocke them that haue: they yet thinke themſelues the better ſubiects, the better Chriſtians, yea fitter to be churchvvardens then profeſſors: and the Biſhops, finding them to be a bridle to ſuch religious ſpirits, are vvell contented, kovving ſuch ignorant conformiſts, are fitteſt for their turnes.

(If the person or curate be also a Droane, a non resident, or a good fellovv, there is a flock strangely gouerned) such are not apt for the kingdome of God, the blind can not leade the blind, the drunkard reforme drunkards. These vvill neuer informe the Bishop of corruption in manners, much lesse in doctrine, such as shames the Christian profession. And if they did, he is but one, he can not looke to things in euerie flock to knovv euerie sheepe, as Elders may in one congregation. If men had not the ceremonies, and seruice, to serue them for an intire religion, or a cloake of one, they could not for shame, but make some profession of loue to the vvord, & good conuersation. If there vvere but three, or fovver religious men in a parish to be the officers, their example might moue the rest, such could not be scorned as they are. In the reformed churches men are ashamed to scorne professors, if they did, they should be reckoned prophane, and soone be questioned; it vvould not serue them to say they loue the common praiers, they should soone be taught to knovv, that

Pro. 28.9. *He that turnes away his eare from hearing of the law his praier shalbe abhominable.*

3. By all this vvee may see, that those abuse the vvorld, vvho for the authoritie of English Bishops, and the Hierarchie there, alledge the succession of Iames at Ierusalem, of Peter at Antioch, of Marke at Alexandria, of Timothie at Ephesus, & Titus in Creete. For vvee see there vvere no such Lord Bishops, Courts, Chancellours, and proceedings as are novv. The Apostles oft staied in these places, and looked to things as generall officers in all churches: but vsed no such Episcopall authoritie as ours doe, vvho come not in by the

Ioh. 10. word, that is by Christ the *Doore*, but clime vp another vvay, by the traditions, and corruptions of men, like theeues that come to steale, to fleece, and not to feede the flock. Ciuill gouernments may vpon good reasons be altered, & a nevv for

of officers ordained. But Christ that changeth not, set officers in his kingdome to gouerne, and therein the perfit forme of his kingdome: the church is a kingdome, vvhich can not be shaken. Timothie vvas an Euangelist, but hath no successours in that office, noe more can the Apostles in theirs: they left to seuerall congregations, the choice of Presbyters, censuring of offendours, and debating of matters as is alreadie proued. Other successours they haue not, * as Papists are answered for Peters being at Rome To as good purpose Bellarmin, and others thinke to make men flee from this opinion, as from a monster, by saying it vvas the heresie of Ærius. *Medina* cited by Bellarmin affirmes, that S. Hierom *vvas therein vvholly of the opinion of the Ærians, and that not only S. Hierom vvas in that heresie, but also Ambrose, Augustine, Sedulius, Primasius, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Oecumenius, and Theophilact: And so* saith Medina, *the opinion of those fathers, otherwise verie holy, and expert in the holy Scriptures, vvas by the church first condemned in Ærius, then in the* VValdenses, *and lastly* in Iohn vvicklife. And againe *Of old therefore this opinion vvas dissembled, and tollerated in* Hierom, *and those* Greeke Fathers *for their honour, and reuerence: contrariwise in the hereticks, because they are also estranged from the church in other things, it hath bene alwaies condemned as hereticall.* Bellarmine sticks not to say, *Medina* wanted vvit, in being thus plaine knowing it had bene maintained in Trent, & that men vvould be ready to affirme, if this be not heresie in Hierom, and those other fathers, neither can it be iustlie called so in Ærius, vvho liued in the same times. VVhich Kemnitius spares not to manifest, shevving that it vvas an ordinarie trick in those times, vvhen they could not answere a mans arguments, to disgrace him vvith the name of heresie. Bellarmin saith, *That all the fathers constantly taught that bishops succeede the Apostles, & Presbyters the 70. disciples.* I answere 1. vvee haue proued the contrarie out of Hierom, & others. 2. That Presbyters who are Bishops

* Heb. 12. 28.

* To gouerne. Bellarm. de clericis l. 1. c. 14.

Hist. of the counc. of Trent. pag. 591.

Examen. conc. Trid.

Vbi supra.

Mat. 28.20 may ſucceede the Apoſtles, as they vvere Paſtors, and Elders of any church, as Peter and Iohn call themſelues, and as Timothie, and Titus vvere, and ſo that may be vnderſtood, I am vvith you alvvaies to the end of the vvorld, in their ſucceſſours as they vvere, Paſtors, Teachers, and Elders, but not as they vvere Apoſtles, and ſo ouer Titus, Timothie, and all Elders. For to be an Apoſtle is to be ſent immediatly from God, to haue an Embaſſage from him, and as *a maiſter builder to lay the foundation for others to build vpon:* & to ordaine, and appoint things, as Paul did. This did the Apoſtles in their Goſpels, Epiſtles, and Acts. But this can not Biſhops do: for they are not ſo ſent immediatly from God, hauing an immediate embaſſage: they haue theirs from the Apoſtles, and Prophets, and ſo mediately. Neither are they maiſter builders, to lay a fondation for others to build vpon, though they oft aſſume it in impoſing their traditions, and rites for lavves: for *other foundation can no man lay, then that is laide, vvhich is Ieſus Christ.* Therfore the Apoſtles can noe other vviſe haue Succeſſours, then as they vvere Paſtors, and Elders,

1.Cor.3. 10.

Tit.1.5.

* Gal.1.8. & that muſt be in teaching the ſame, & *noe other doctrine,

* Vbi ſupra *Medina* alledged by Bellarmin, ſaith, *The hereticks the vvaldenſes vſed the teſtimonie of Hierom, they therefore, and Hierom vvere of one opinion*, that is, that the church ought to be gouerned by Preſbiters, and that the gouernment by diocefan Biſhops is of humaine authoritie, and inuention: and

Rom. 8.7. conſequently *the vviſdome of the fleſh*, vvhich is *enmitie vvith God: for it is not ſubiect to the law of God, neither indeede can be.* As vvee may ſee in thoſe greate defendors of the Hierarchie in the church of Rome, and in England, that vvill not be conuinced, in this point, by the Teſtament of Chriſt: So much are they blinded by the proffit, and honour, that followes it, but crie out that this is nothing, but the madnes of the Brovvniſts, and ſome others that ſeeke innovation, & change, that theſe are priuate ſpirits, and that they giue

priuate

priuate interpretation of the ſcriptures, and Fathers, becauſe it agrees not vvith theirs, vvho are more in number, and greater in povver. VVhich yet is the *priuate interpretation*, becauſe not according to the expreſſe meaning of the holy Ghoſt. The conſent of many clocks, and vvatches in a citie, doth not proue them to goe true, vnles they accord vvith the Sunne: No more doth that of many Biſhops, and Councels, vnles they agree vvith the vvord. One Paphnutius hauing that on his ſide is not a priuate ſpirit, but ought to be preferred before many of a contrarie concord, as the Councell of Nice ſhevved in him. Therefore, it is but a ſhift, and a mockerie to call this *Tenet* Brovvniſme, vvhen they knovv this of the Elderſhip is the gouernmēt of the reformed churches in France, Germanie, &c. and that to condemne this for an errour, is to condemne them all, yea the fathers before alledged, and the verie Apoſtles themſelues.

It vvill be obiected, Dioceſſan Biſhops came in, ſoone after the death of the Apoſtles: and if the church gouerned by Elders be the true church, vvhere vvas the true church from the firſt comming in of dioceſſan Biſhops, till the Nicene Councell, vvhēn they vvere firſt confirmed by a generall councell, and Imperiall authoritie, *and the vvoman fled into the vvildernes*, and vvas followed by a flood of Gothes, and Vandals? I anſvvere, Biſhops vvere then dioceſſan, & prouintiall, rather *nomine, quam re*, in name then indeed, excerciſing litle povver, and authoritie ouer them, as ye haue ſeene out of the teſtimonie of Cyprian, Hierom, and Chryſoſtom. *VVhat doeth the biſhop, giuing of orders excepted, vvhich the Preſbyter may not doe?* He vvas not then come to his power, and ſtrength, but vvas then litle other then a Preſbyter in matter of gouernment, had a Paſtorall charge ouer one congregation, yea gouerned like them, and vvith them: the Preſbyters had their voices in Councels, they neither vvere nor Reuel. 12.

vvould be ſo ſoone thruſt out. So that for a time, they had ſtill the eſſentiall parts of a true church: at leaſt till ſuch ſtaines, and blemiſhes grevv greater, & the Hierarchie excerciſed more authoritie ouer the Preſbiters, and became the mint, defence, & authority of humaine inuentiõ, errour & ſuperſtitiõ, & to be made a marke of a true church. Then the miſtery of iniquitie, that had long before vvrought, in that inuentiõ, began to ſhevv the fruits thereof: then that vvas true vvhich one ſaith of epiſcopacie, *It vvas inuented againſt an euill, but the remedy proued worſe then the diſeaſe*. For out of theſe ſmal beginnings, iſſued. 1. The inſupportable povver, & impietie of the Pope, and church of Rome: vvhich haue brought ſo many, and ſo vnſpeakeable euills on the church. For though perhaps thoſe ancients meant to doe noe hurt, but rather much good, in ordaining dioceſſan Biſhops, and giuing them but litle power: yet hereby the miſterie of iniquity wrought: for they thus preſuming to ſet one ouer others in a dioceſſe, this povver increaſed: & vvith like reaſon, & authoritie Archbiſhops, and Patriarcks vvere ſet ouer Biſhops, & in the end Pope ouer all. For grant they may ordaine dioceſſan Biſhops, and that their ordinance is by a diuine inſtinct, and of good authoritie, and it vvill fellovv, that others after them, may as vvell ordaine the reſt: and that their ordinance alſo is by diuine inſtinct, and of good authoritie: & ſo indeed to ordaine Cardinals, and as manie vpſtart orders of Prieſts, and friers, as are among the Papiſts. I might add ſetting vp of Images to be vvorſhipped, and all other popiſh *Tenets*, and cuſtomes, vvhich haue bene authoriſed by councels, and kings, if that vvere ſufficient, as ſome thinke it is.

Hence therefore as from a ſpring haue iſſued all the errours of the Romiſh church, eſtabliſhed by Biſhops in councels for ſound, and good doctrines, and all the vaſt authoritie, and povver of Biſhops, and the multitude of thoſe traditions,

traditions, and ceremonies, vvherevvith, they as Rulers, haue burdened the church, and by vvhich the vvord of God hath bene made of none effect: So that novv neither the Romiſh, nor Engliſh, Biſhops, vvill endure that the ſcriptures ſhould be alledged in theſe points of their Hierarchie, & traditions: and many as vvell of the Princes, and Clergie, as of the common people, ſeeing the name, and office of a Biſhop in the Scriptures, are contented vvith the Biſhops, to take it for graunted, that it is meant of dioceſſan Biſhops, that the gouernment of the church, vvas in the nevv Teſtament giuen to them, & not to Elders: or at leaſt as others inferre, As the church vvas enlarged, vnder the old title of biſhops a nevv order of gouernment might be ordained by counſailes of men, and authoritie of Emperours, and kings, for the better gouernment of the church. As if any thing could be better deuiſed, or bring forth better fruite, then the ordinance of God: vvho hath puniſhed, that preſumption vvith ſo ill fruites of it, to make vs ſee the contrarie: or as if the Teſtament of God vvere inſufficient, and he had not as ſufficientlie prouided for his church in this point, as in others. He vvill teach vs at length to knovv the tree by the fruit: and that theſe great places in the Hierarchie, are but meere baites to corrupt men: and make them to pleaſe ſuch biſhops, and courtiers as can aduance them, offers bribes, vvreſt the Scriptures for the Hierarchie, Arminiaiſme, and ſuch popiſh points, traditions, and ceremonies, as make the vvord of God of none effect.

Neither is it any reaſoning from the time of Auguſtin, and thoſe fathers, that ſavv Dioceſſan Biſhops, and ſaid not much againſt them, but rather ſeemed to thinke their vſe, tollerable, and profitable, and them to be hereticks, that denied it, beeing eſtabliſhed by councels.

1. Becauſe

1. Becauſe the povver of Biſhops, as vve proued in thoſe daies, vvas nothing like that they novv haue, but as one ſaith, as vnlike, as the povver of the Duke of Venice in the Senate, is to that vvhich ſome Monarch hath in his dominions, and ouer his ſubiects.

2. Thoſe Fathers had not ſeene ſuch fruits of it, in Antichriſt, and Antichriſtian povver, as vve haue: and ſo vvhat it is to take ſuch a cuſtome, or an ordinance of a Concell, for a good vvarrant. So many traditions, and ſuperſtitious rites vvere not then inuented, much leſſe propoſed as lavves by the Epiſcopall povver.

3. That it is no reaſoning from the conſent, or continuance of the fathers, if the inſtitution be not vvarrantable by Gods vvord. Neither they nor a generall Councell, nor Emperours, & kings, can make that to be *ex iure diuino*, vvhich is not ſo by Gods Teſtament. Men vvill not preſume to make other Ouerſeers to a mans Teſtament, then he hath appointed, to ſee it performed, much leſſe ought they to doe it to Gods, as they haue in ordaining dioceſſan Biſhops, and ſuffering them to obſcure, and annihilate thoſe places of ſcripture, vvherein God giues the Eccleſiaſticall gouernment to the Preſbyters, or ſacrilegiouſly to vſurpe, and applie them to any gouernment, ſo contrarie to the Elderſhip, as that of the Hierarchie is. Theſe paſſages of the nevv Teſtament are *the letters Patents of the Preſbyterie*: and yet dioceſſan Biſhops doe not only vſurpe them, as Papiſts doe ſome places for the Pope, and make them ſerue to authoriſe a contrary gouernment, moſt pernicious to the ordinance of God, but quite exclude the Preſbyters, to vvhome they vvere granted, from the gouernment, and from that effectuall povver in Synods, vvhich is due to them, & not to Biſhops vvho could not vvell be oppoſed in the Nicene Councell, becauſe the hurt, and vvrong that Biſhops doe to Chriſt's kingdom

ingdome could not be ſo manifeſt to Conſtantine, and his onnes, nor ſo euident in the time of Cyprian, and Atha-aſius, as it vvas ſince, or novv is. Euen as the Lion, or Leo-ard doth but litle harme, vvhile it is but a litle vvhelpe. For ndeed they had not ſuch dominion ouer Preſbiters, nor ch courts, Chancellours, Officials, Deanes, povver in pro-ates of vvilles, and Teſtaments, much leſſe in forbidding he defence of the truth againſt Pelagians: nor ſuch Rules, nd ceremonies to ſuſpend, and ſilence about ſurpleſſes, cere-nonies, &c. Neither can the church giue it them, much eſſe, ſome in Synods, that beare the name of the church, if he things giuen, and commanded be againſt the kingdome, nd ordinance of God, or make religion rediculous, and the vord of none effect, as may be ſaid of the Hierarchie, and me ceremonies.

As namely that in baptiſing an Infant, they ſhould *ſigne im, vvith the ſigne of the croſſe in token, that he ſhall not be ſhamed to confeſſe the faith of Chriſt, and manfully to fight nder his banner againſt ſinne, &c.* and yet vvhen he comes age, he is prohibited to contend for that faith againſt Ar-inian and popiſh, errours: yea a miniſter is alſo forbidden o doe it, though at his ordination he is made to promiſe *o be ready vvith all diligence to baniſh, and driue away all rronious, & ſtrange doctrines, contrarie to Gods vvord:* ¶ What See the ordering of Biſhops Prieſts, &c. nockeries are theſe? And novv in theſe daies of the churches rouble, & perſecution, haue the Engliſh, that ſtand ſo much or theſe ſignes, and ceremonies, proued better ſouldiers of Chriſt, in ſuch caſes as that of the Palatinate, and the like, hen they of other churches, that haue them not? or haue ey not rather proued vvorſe? Doe they more feare God, re they more obedient to his ordinances, and keepe the hurch more vncorrupt, then thoſe Proteſtants that vveare o ſurpleſſes, bovv not to the Altar, nor kneele not vvhen

they receiue? Surely not more, but leſſe. Such a one as Doctor Lambe, or other prophane men, amidſt all their knowne abhominations, may liue in more peace with them, then one, that without iuſt cauſe they call a Puritain. God is much better pleaſed when churches, and their learned defenders, are more in deedes, and leſſe in ſuch ſignes of humaine inuention, as are but meere mockeries, and burdens.

That ancient Biſhops and Synods haue vſed, and ordained theſe, & the like things, is no warrant for them. For you may ſee the caſe of the ancient Biſhops in their ſucceſſions, by the Engliſh, and their moſt learned defenders: who (as many now liuing haue ſeene) becauſe they receiued not *the loue of the Truth*, in matter of the Elderſhip, traditions, and ceremonies, but *their *feare toward God* hath, in theſe caſes, been *taught by the precepts of men:* therefore God hath giuen them ouer to beleeue ſome popiſh, and Arminian lies: and becauſe they receiue not the loue of the truth, in thoſe matters of Arminianiſme, wherin alſo their feare toward God is taught by the precepts of men, God muſt needes giue them ouer to ſtronger deluſions, to beleeue vvorſe things, & the vviſdome of their vviſe, and learned men, muſt needes be more, and more hid, and periſhing: and they muſt needes fall more, and more into earthly polecies, practiſes, and factions, to colour, and maintaine vvhat they haue done amiſſe, and to hold vp, and increaſe their povver againſt parliaments, and all their oppoſers: vvhich is not to preſerue order, but to confound it, nor to be true, but falſe helpers to kings, and States: vvherby Romiſh religion is more helped, then the Proteſtant, the Houſe of Auſtria, then the houſe of God, the greate vvhore, then the reformed churches, and all true, & effectuall confederacie, vvith thoſe churches, againſt the common enemie, is hindred: for indeed to deſire Romes ouerthrovv, vvere to ſeeke their ovvne, in that vvhich is Romiſh: they can not truly

2. Theſ. 2.

* Iſa. 29.

truly loue them, that are gouerned by Preſbiters: for *vvhat communion hath light vvith darknes?* 2. Cor. 6. 10.

Hence it is that forraigne Proteſtants, vvho, truſting to the helpe of the Engliſh haue ſuffered for it, and in ſteade of helpe haue ſeene many dangerous diuiſions in Engliſh parliaments, and counſailes, vvhich could not haue bene ſo carried avvay, but by the helpe, and countenance of the Biſhops, ſay, that theſe euils in England, and all others, that by theſe meanes haue befallen the reformed churches, haue ſprung from the Engliſh prelacie, & Hierarchie, vvhich bring forth ſuch Proteſtants, & Biſhops, & vvhich maintaine a nevvtrall, or mixed religion, partly popiſh, in the Hierarchie, traditions, and ceremonies, maintained vvith moſt zeale, partly of the reformed, in points of faith leſſe regarded, and partly of Arminianiſme lately receiued: all vvhich makes them lukevvarme Laodiceans, or nevvters, that as much helpe the one ſide, as the other, in treaties, leagues, ſuccours, &c. And ſo the Prelates, vvith their Hierarchie, and traditions, are like to the riuer Euphrates, that ran betvveene Babylon, & her enemies, vvatered both ſides, & hindred the ſurpriſing of her, as theſe muſt needes doe the ſacking of Rome, till their dominion, & riches, that makes them thus corrupt, be taken avvay, & their reuenues turned to better vſes. And therefore their ſaying againſt vs, that this is Cham like to diſcouer the nakenes of 1. Sam. 6. 16.
ones Father, or mother, vvith the Bethſhemites to prie *into the Arke*, vvith Vzzah that offered to ſupport it, to meddle 2 Sam. 6.
in things that belong not to vs, but to the Biſhops: there muſt be ſuch to preſerue order, and all the other parts of their plea, are plainly abuſed, made meere ſhifts, & might as vvell haue ſerued the Papiſts againſt VValdo, Luther & Calvin, as them againſt the Elderſhip. If they vvould ſpeake truth, they might rather ſay, as by *Conſtantines*, ſo by Queen *Elizabeths* comming to the crovvne, vvith peace entred plentie, & honour, and vvith them ambition, couetouſnes, & corruption.

So in ſhort time, and by degrees, it fared vvith thoſe ancient Biſhops, their feare tovvard God in matters of their Hierarchie, traditions, and ceremonies, began to be taught by the precepts of men: vvith theſe ambition, and coueteouſnes entred into the church: therefore firſt in theſe, & then in other things, their vviſdome began to be hid, and periſhing, ſo that they could not ſee the miſchiefes following dioceſſan, and prouinciall Biſhops.

4. The church of Rome, at that time the Bulvvark, and authoritie of dioceſſan Epiſcopacie, vvas not then knovvne to be the *VVhore* of Babylon, and *mother of fornications*: but for her integritie in other matters, as againſt Arrians, and other hereticks vvas thought the *pillar of truth*: and for the greatnes of her Biſhop not oppoſed by many, but rather applauded by the moſt: therefore fevv or none vvould then ſpeake againſt her cuſtome, and tenets: vvhich indeede made their ovvne Epiſcopall authoritie to be held the more lavvfull; and neceſſarie, the rather becauſe of the honour & profit, that accompanied it: So prone is all mankinde to encline to thoſe vanities, and be blinded by them.

5. Though it vvere vvithout all true authoritie of Scripture, yet cuſtome, and conſent of Synods had eſtabliſhed, and increaſed it, as they alſo did the primacie, and povver of the Pope in the Nicene, Sardean, and other councels: & therefore it vvas thought an hereſie in Ærius to diſſent from them: vvhereas the hereſie vvas rather in them that diſſented from the inſtitution, and practiſe of the church in the time of the Apoſtles: but indeed the miſterie of iniquitie could not other vviſe haue vvrought, that the church of Rome ſhould become the great vvhore, and her Biſhop the Antichriſt. For theſe ordinances, that ſet vp dioceſſan Biſhops, Archbiſhops and Patriarchs, vvith many nevv rites, and ceremonies, further

of Rome; and ſuch vvas then the cuſtome, and doctrine of that church, implying that they vvere neceſſarie: therefore it vvas counted Schiſme, and hereſie to hold any thing to the cõtrarie, though taught in ſcriptures, the name of the church did carrie it againſt all proofes vvhatſoeuer. If any oppoſed, and ſaide, theſe things vvere Ievviſh, heatheniſh, or Antichriſtian, or tended that vvay, they could not vvant inſtrumentall daubers, to quiet or confound them, vvith abuſing ſuch places as that, *If ye bite & deuoure one another, take heede ye be not deuoured one of another. Keepe the vnitie of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* Diſpute not about things indifferent, but rather obſerue vnitie, and vniformitie, vvith due obedience to the church, to Biſhops, to Synods, and their ordinances: and neuer ſay they are ill carried: be not ſo ſeditious, ſchiſmaticall or peruerſe: they are your guides, and you ſhould be guided, and ruled by them. By theſe, and the like meanes, and deuiſes, they paſſed from errour to errour. Gal. 5. 15. Epheſ. 4. 3.

Euen as at this day in England, the Supporters of the Hierarchie, and Arminianiſme preuaile by the ſame reaſons, by abuſing the ſame, and the like places, and by ſaying, the ancient Synods ordained Archbiſhops, and Biſhops, and the cuſtome, and doctrine of the church of England doe implie, and teach, that they, and their traditions, and gouernment are neceſſarie, therefore it is ſchiſme, and hereſie to diſſent from them, that is, though you hold vvith the ſcriptures: the name of the church of England muſt carrie it againſt all prooſes vvhatſoeuer: and therefore though they vvill not be accounted Papiſts, as thoſe are vvho ſtand for the Pope, yet are they Pontificians, ſuch as maintaine dioceſſan, and prouinciall Biſhops, & the oppoſers thereof to be ſchiſmaticks and hereticks. For they knovv, that as it vvas of old, ſo at this day, the calling of them hereticks, is (next to povver, cuſtome and humaine conſtitution) the beſt argument to defend their

Hierarchie, and the traditions thereof. For vvhile they ſcoffe at them, and their *Tenets*, and call them hereticks, Puritains, & peruerſe Spirits, that labour to proue that the Hierarchie ought to be aboliſhed, & the Elderſhip reſtored, this makes Princes, nobles, miniſters, and people to ſtop their eares, and eyes, againſt all the beſt reaſons, and proofes of Scripture, in theſe caſes, and in like manner to ſcoffe at them. * So the Phariſes derided Chriſt, like as at this day, the greateſt defence of Romiſh religion, is ſcoffing at the Proteſtant faith, calling it hereſie, & them hereticks that profeſſe it: this makes Princes, Prieſts, and people to looke no further, but to ſtop their eares againſt all proofes, as againſt the Sophiſtrie of hereticks. VVith this deuiſe alſo hath the church of Rome preuailed from time to time, and by it ran from one errour to another, till ſhe became full of abhominations, and to haue ſuch povver, that no man durſt vndertake to conuince her. And ſo may the church of England, vvho hath begun ſuch a progreſſe, in ſome popiſh ceremonies, & Arminian errours, vvhich are maintained by practiſes, as beeing ſuch, as they vvill ſuffer no man to diſpute againſt: but vvith povver, and cunning pretences prohibit all from gainſaying her Prelates in any thing, as the church of Rome did. This is to *haue dominion ouer mens faith*, vvhich the Apoſtles abhorred, ſeeing the truth of God, is in theſe points reuealed, and things *reuealed belong to vs*, to vvhome it is giuen to *contend for the faith*. VVhence it muſt needes follovv, that they alſo vvill get a povver to doe, & teach vvhat they liſt, and yet no man ſhall dare to conuince them. For Chriſt ſaith, *He that is vniuſt in the leaſt, is vniuſt alſo in much*.

* Luk. 16. 14.
Iohn 9.29.
* 2. Cor. 1. 24.
Luk. 16. 10

Let no man therefore ſay theſe are ſmall differences, that the authoritie of Biſhops ſhould be receiued in them, or that they are matters too high for the people, ſeeing they are not higher then the myſteries of the Trinitie, vvhich being

alſo

alſo taught in Scriptures ſhould be held of all, and not forbidden, as theſe are, to open a gap for * poperie to enter. For ſuch euer haue bene, ſuch are, and ſuch muſt needes be the fruit of greatnes in the clergie. And therefore vvhereas ſome ſay, as the church grevv larger, and larger, ſo there might be nevv offices, & officers ordained, hauing greater honour, and more ample iuriſdiction, and command, euer vvhole countries, and Prouinces, they ſee here the fruits of it, in Rome, and in England. It is not the putting of religious men into the papacie, or into Engliſh Biſhopvvricks, that vvill helpe theſe things, if the callings be of men, and not of God, as is proued in both. For out of this opinion Antichriſt aroſe to his greatnes, and the church of Rome to her authoritie, errour, and tyrannie, and *that vvhich is highly eſteemed amongſt men is* (*oft times*) *abhomination in the ſight of God*, that puniſheth mens inuentions, and preſumptions. VVhich in this caſe vvere verie abſurd. For the church vvas much enlarged in the Apoſtles daies, yet did they not appoint dioceſſan Biſhops, and Archbiſhops: but as churches vvere daily founded in any kingdome, ſo they *ordained them Elders, and deacons in euery church* or congregation, hauing no other ſpirituall head then Chriſt; nor no other meanes to repreſſe errour, and Schiſme, then vvas in the Apoſtles time, to vvit, calling of Synods to reduce doctrine, and diſcipline to that of the Apoſtles. VVhich indeed ſhould be furthered, cheriſhed, and maintained by kings, and Magiſtrates, as by nurſing fathers. VVherein all ſhould remember thoſe things. *Remoue not the ancient bounds, vvhich thy Fathers haue ſet. He that breaketh an hedge a Serpent ſhall bite him.* The Inuentours, enlargers, and maintainers of Dioceſſan Epiſcopacie, haue remoued, and broken the bounds, the Apoſtles ſet, and haue planted Dioceſſan, and Prouinciall Biſhops, trees that brought out fruits accordingly

* Which is the drift of the protectors and Abettors.

Luk. 16. 15

Act. 14. 23 Tit. 1. 5.

Pro. 22. 28 Eccle. 10. 8

accordingly many biting errours haue bene propagated by the great names of Biſhops and Popes, ſuch as Paulus Semoſateneus, Liberius, Neſtorius, and many others, after the bounds were brokē, which ſhould haue bin better obſerued. And if in any congregation, by reaſon of the largenes of the pariſh, or the many, and rich people that dvvell in it, ſome miniſters come to better meanes then other, happy man by his lot: that is the greateſt difference, that ought to haue bene betvveene one Paſtor & an other. The choice of miniſters lying moſt in the pariſh, and ſuch miniſters, and Elders, as dvvell neere about them. And this vvay miniſters, and people ſhould haue bene better prouided for, then now they are, vvhen ſome haue double benefices, Biſhopvvricks, Denaries, comendaes, and in a vvord ſome fevv haue all, though they preach litle, but the moſt haue litle or neuer a vvhit, though they vvould preach, and inſtruct. Therefore vvhereas ſome ſay theſe places are better encouragments to make Schollars ſtuddie, then the paritie of the Puritains: vve ſee here that they are rather nurſeries of ſuperſtition, briberie, ſimonie, non reſidencie, idlenes, ambition, and errour, and meere allurements to make men ſtuddie, to maintaine ſuch traditions, and ceremonies as make the vvord of none effect, to get dominion ouer mens faith, and euen to mold religion after the pleaſure of ſuch as can aduance them to thoſe great places: ſo exceedingly doe they corrupt the church. And therefore that hath, and vvill more fully be found of them vvhich Zanchie ſaith of the Hierarchie, & ordinances of the ancient fathers, and councels. * *All things by ſucceſſion of times vvere brought to an extreame tyrannie and ambition: vvhich is the reaſon vvhy, by ſo much the neerer, as men approach in theſe orders of miniſters to the ſimplicitie of the Apoſtles, by ſo much the more ought they to be approued by vs, and vvee iudge that men ought to indeauour that things may euery vvhere be brought*

Zanch. ſides de religio. Chriſtia. cap. 25. Sec. 12.

to that order. All the Reformed Churches hold, and followv
the proofes of this opinion. Only the Prelates and Doctors Ioh. 3. 20.
of England account them verie ſtrange, and therefore hate
the light in this point. So that God may ſay of them, as of
Ephraim, *I haue vvriten to him the greate things of my law,* Hoſ. 3. 12.
but they vvere counted as a ſtrang thing. They haue a better
opinion of their ovvne ordinances, and are better acquainted
with them: they ſuffer Princes, and people to heare, and
novv them, and all the reaſons they haue for them; but not
the proofes that are for the Elderſhip, though our Lord ſay:
He that is of God, heareth Gods vvords: yee therefore heare Ioh. 8. 47.
them not, becauſe ye are not of God. *Euery one that is of the* chap. 18. 37
truth heareth my voice. VVherein they are not the more
excuſable, becauſe theſe or the like things haue bene in ſome
part vſed by the ancient churches, or are commanded by
Kings & States, vvhen indeed it hath commonly bene, at the
inſtance of the Biſhops or their faction. It is ſtrang that men,
that thus beare all the ſvvay in the church, rule all things, and
then giue lavves to others, haue no other vvarrant for this
their office, & authority, then cuſtome, Eccleſiaſtical conſtitu-
tion, vvherein themſelues haue bene the Iudges, or the con-
ſent, and appointment of Kings. For as to ſuch cuſtome, and
conſtitution, that which a learned Author ſaith in a like caſe,
is vvorthy obſeruation. The impietie of Neſtorius had diuided Hiſtor. of
Chriſt, making two ſonnes, and denying him to be God, who was borne the counc.
of the bleſſed virgin, the church to inculcate the Catholike truth in the of Trent.
minds of the faithfull, made often mencion of her in the churches, as pag. 18.
well of the Eaſt, as of the Weſt, with this title, Marie the mother of God.
This being inſtituted only for the honour of Chriſt, was by litle, and litle
communicated alſo to the mother, and finally applied to her alone, and
therefore when Images began to multiplie, Chriſt was painted as a babe
in his mothers armes, to put vs in minde of the worſhip due vnto him,
then in that age. But in progreſſe of time it was turned into the worſhip
of the mother, without the ſonne, he remaining as an appendex in the
picture. The writers and Preachers, eſperiallie thoſe that were contem-
platiue, caried with the torrent of the vulgar, which is able to doe much

in theſe matters, leauing to mencion Chriſt, inuented with one accord new praiſes, Epithites, and religious ſeruices: In ſo much, that aboute the yeere 1050. a daily office was inſtituted to the bleſſed virgin, diſtinguiſhed by ſeuen Canonical howres, in a forme which anciently was euer vſed to the honour of the diuine maieſtie, and in the next hundred yeers, the worſhip ſo increaſed, that it came to the height, euen to attribute that vnto her, which the Scriptures ſpeake of the diuine wiſdome. And amongſt theſe inuented nouities, this was one, her totall exemption from originall ſinne. Yet this remained only in the breaſts of ſome few priuate men, hauing no place in Eccleſiaſticall ceremonies, or amõgſt the learned. He ſheweth, how it was oppoſed, and yet after came to be receiued by the induſtrie of Scotus, and other Franciſcans, which is a Storie too lõg for this place. From this part of the narration, wee ſee how many euils ſprung from that ancient inuention of painting Chriſt as a babe in his mothers armes, which it may be, did litle hurt at the firſt, and was beheld, as a thing indifferent, with litle or no offence, & accounted tollerable, if allowed by authoritie. The inuentors might meane as litle harme in it, yet doubtles the inuention, and allowance gaue occaſion of all theſe euils, & was ſome breach of the ſecond comandement; as women that friſle their hair, paint, or lay open their naked breaſts are occaſions of luſt, & breake the commandement, & ſuch precepts, as require modeſtie, though they doe not theſe things on purpoſe to make men fornicators, but for faſhion ſake, to get husbands, or the like reaſon. At this day there is ſuch an Image of the virgin reedified, & beautified at the croſſe in cheape ſide. Beſides Engliſh Papiſts, diuers Spaniards, & others, haue bene obſerued to worſhip it: and therefore neither the ancient cuſtome of this inuention, nor any conſtitution allowing it, nor the litle hurt it did at the firſt, or now doth to many, can ſerue to excuſe the Rulers that ſuffer it. For wee ſee many kings are blamed for ſuffering the high places, which ſome time were litle frequented, or at leaſt not by many. Smal faults & errours make way for greater. It may be the inuentors, and maintainers of dioceſſan Biſhops, & ſom Romiſh ceremonies meant

s litle hurt at the first, as any of these; yet seeing they haue
one, doe, & may doe so much hurt, it is a great fault to main-
taine or tuſter them. The Iesuits know, that the maintenance
f them, and ſuppreſſing of bookes againſt them, are notable
nductions to nevvtralitie, luke vvarmnes, ignorance, errour,
nd poperie, as they finde in many Arminians, and pontifici-
ns: & further, that no Proteſtant church in the vvorld hath
handiom a cloake for a church Papiſt, Spaniſh, or Romiſh,
s these ſerue for. And yet these, as all the errours of the Ro-
niſh church, being once receiued, haue bene maintained by
men of great pietie, & knovvledge in other things. VVho are
thought to haue more knovvledge, holines, & deuotion then
ſome Franciſcans, that maintaine theſe errours about the bleſ-
ed virgin, & others of poperie. The deuil, & all corrupt men,
hauing once broached any errour, euer get ſome of the moſt
religious, and learned to defend it, or at leaſt, that it is a thing
indifferent or tollerable: thus the beginnings of Dioceſſan
Biſhops, and Romiſh ceremonies, ſome primacie in the
Pope, Images in the churches to a religious vſe, and the like,
being begun vvith ſmaller digreſſions from the truth, haue
gained ſome to defend them, as things indifferent, and tolle-
rable, vvho vvere reckoned, & oft vvere, men of great knovv-
ledge, and pietie in other matters: and then theſe errours, and
abuſes, being thus defended, grevv greater, and more intolle-
rable. So the Biſhops in England, hauing gotten ſome men
to ſubſcribe, that are verie learned, & religious, they then get
them alſo to defend their Hierarchie, traditions, and ceremo-
nies: vvhich doctrine they knovv, vvill be beſt receiued at
ſuch mens hand, as vvee haue of late ſeene in Doctor *Burges*,
and others, much graced by the Biſhops, vvho among
themſelues alſo haue ſome that are, and others, that ſeeme
to be verie religious in many things. But vvee ſhould re-
member, that theſe are but men, that engaged a litle in any
cauſe, are ſubiect to fall farther into it, that gifts or hopes of

preferment blind the eies of the vvise, that the church of Rome could neuer haue gained her cause in so many things, if she had not had the helpe of men, esteemed as religious, and learned; that she could neuer vvant of this sort, vvho had such revvards for her champions, & such povver to suspend, and silence, the oppoſers; no more can the Bishops.

Art. 34. The 34. Article saith thus, *It is not necessary that traditions, & ceremonies be in all places one, or vtterly like, for at all times, they haue bene diuers, and may be changed according to the diuersitie of countries times, and mens manners, so that nothing be ordained, against Gods vvord.* I answvere, in some cases this may be admitted. For the Apostle vvould not haue a man praying, to be couered in the church, and in those hot countries, if any that might wel endure to be bareheaded in praier, as the most might, should haue vvorne a night cap, or the like thing in the church, it had bene as greate an euill in him as if he had vvorne a hatt: yet in ours, being a much colder countrie, the church, vvith good reason, allovveth such to vveare night caps in time of praier, as can not vvith safety of their health be vncouered so long. God requires not the death or danger of his creatures in such cases. In Muscouie, Svvede, and some colder Climates, men are so bitten vvith frost, that they are constrained to keepe somvvhat on their heads. Here necessitie requireth, that the ceremonie be not the same, nor in some old or sick body, that is not able to kneele all the time of praier. But vvhat necessitie is there for the crosse in Baptisme, the surplesse, copes, or kneeling at the Sacrament, which vvere not vsed in the age of the Apostles, are but meere mockeries, make the vvord of none effect, and haue bene so much abused to idollatrie, as the Image of the blessed virgin? Because the Apostle saith, *Let all things be done decently, and in order*, therefore some infer, the church or the magistrate may ordaine these, and the like. A foolish

1. Cor. 11. 4. &c.

1. Cor. 14. 40.

inference,

inferenee, that ſerues as vvell for the Papiſts, and their trumperies, pretended to belong to decencie, & order, as for them. For hovv is there more decencie, and order, in theſe things then vvas in the time of the Apoſtles, or is novv in the reformed churches? The Apoſtle ſpeakes of decencie and order, vvhereby they ſhould be the better Chriſtians, the vvomen being couered, the men vncouered in time of praier: the men ſpeaking in a knovvne tongue, and one after another, not confuſedly, the vvomen keeping ſilence in the church: of theſe, and the like, he ſaith, Let all things be done decently, and in order. But vvhat better Chriſtians are men for the croſſe in baptiſme, for the ſurpleſſe, and kneeling at the Sacrament? vvhat more decencie, and order in the ſurpleſſe, then in a ſhirt of haire, a Ieſuits cloake a friers vvhite roabe, a Capuchins gray govvne, & hood, or the rope vvherevvith he girds himſelfe? vvhat more decencie, and order in the croſſe in baptiſme, then in the croſſe that hangs at the friers girdle? in kneeling at the receiuing of the bread, then in kneeling at the feete of a Prieſt in confeſſion, before a croſſe, or Image, or at their receiuing of the hoſt? vvhat more decencie, and order in dioceſſan, & prouinciall Biſhops, Chancellours, Deanes, and Archdeacons, and their courts, and proceedings, then in thoſe of the church of Rome, the Cardinals Generals, and Canoniſts, ſaue in the degrees of ſuperſtition and impietie?

That place indeed giues vvarrant in ſome caſes, as touching the time, and place of Gods vvorſhip, and needefull ceremonies therein. That on the Lords day, it ſhould begin about 8. or 9. in the morning, and end before noone, and begin againe about tvvo, becauſe men in many places haue far to church, and the daies being ſhort, muſt haue time to goe to, and fro, and to dine. That though in the primatiue church, the place vvere oft in mens houſes, a barne, or in the feildes:

yet nowv it is fit to haue a Temple, vvhere it may be had, or a place ſet apart for that vſe. In the reformed churches one reades the chapters, & begins the Pſalmes, theſe things are done in better order, when they are committed to one, vvho commonly hath a good voice, and ſkill in tuning: and if it vvere not ſo, there vvould be ſome diſorder. Order is alſo taken for the moſt decent comming to the table of the Lord, gathering of almes, keeping ſilence, and vſing decent geſture in the church. Nowv if theſe things were not altogether thus in the primatiue church: yet the alteration in ceremonie, is litle or nothing, and rather to things decent, and neceſſarie, then to hurtfull, & vnproffitable. But this can not be ſaid of the croſſe in baptiſme, the ſurpleſſe, or kneeling at the Sacrament, much leſſe of the Epiſcopall povver, and Hierarchie, theſe are not things neceſſarie, but vnproffitable, & hurtfull, not better but vvorſe. In England verie many Miniſters, & ſome that haue ſmal meanes, weare beuer hats of great price (which not many yeeres ſince vvere vvorne of none but Princes) alſo caſſocks, & dublits of Satrin, cloakes faced, & ſome lined vvith velvet & pluſh: their vvives alſo goe in looſe govvnes of ſilke, beuer hats, fannes in their hands, and many other vanities. It is true that both the one, and the other may goe neate, & cleane, not ſordid, and naſtie, but yet not thus coſtly, and vainly: vvherin they making litle conſcience, are the eaſier induced to thinke of tvvo liuings to maintaine it, and a coach to boote, & then of being made Doctors, Deanes, & Biſhops, and ſomtimes at the inſtance of their vvives, becauſe they vvould haue place, yea to buye theſe honours, and benefices, or flatter for them: vvherin mens mindes are ſeldome ſatisfied, but rather more enflamed, and corrupted: being Doctors they vvould haue a prebendaries or another liuing, and then be Deanes: hauing a Deanrie, they vvould haue a Biſhoppvvrick, hauing gotten that, they aime at a better: and to attaine them, they are ſtill

forced

forced to flatter, bribe, bid, & outbid, as in a market, or vvhere things are ſold by the candle, or at an outcrie, to the extreme ſhame of the Chriſtian profeſſiō. So that if theſe great places vvere lavvfull, yet almoſt nothing is left to deſert, or free election: commonly all goes by money, corruption, or friends in the court, ſuch as the Duke, vvho ſtrengthen their faction, by them. Hence followes idlenes, and non reſidence, lukevvarmnes, and temporiſing: they vvho make no conſcience of ſuch things can not but be blind in others, the ſpirit of God forſakes them, they are the more eaſely induced to defend the Hierarchie, and ceremonies, to let in Arminianiſme, ſome kinde of poperie, or other corruption in doctrine, and diſcipline at the pleaſure of ſuch as can aduance them, or at leaſt to vvinke at ſuch proceedings: and thus they become nouriſhers of poperie, and the ſteps to it; for our Sauiour ſaith, *He that is not vvith me is againſt me, and he that gathereth not vvith me ſcattereth abroade.* Mat. 12. 30 But indeed an euill tree can not bring foorth good fruite. Theſe great places in the Hierarchie being not of God, but of men, ſuch muſt needes be the fruits of them. If the church ſeeing theſe euils ſpring from pride, ambition, & couetouſnes, ſhould ordaine a meane to all, in apparell, and yeerely maintenance, and ſuch other things, like that in the reformed churches, doubtles ſuch an ordinãce vvere to be obeied, the church hath povver to doe it, not ſimplie, & abſolutely by any authoritie giuen it in all things, that they pleaſe to call indifferent, but in things thus neceſſarie, & agreable to the vvord of Gods, vvhich forbids ſuch coſtly apparell, and lordſhip in them, & commands them to be graue, and enſamples to the flocks: the churches authoritie is nothing but in theſe caſes, and ſuch others of diſcipline as is abouenamed. In all other, Chriſt is the only Lavvgiuer of his Church, as the Sole huſband thereof, and Lord of the familie.

Not

Not to insist vpon other things, vvhat necessarie vse is there, of Cathedral churches, of vvhich, some make so much religion, to haue them reedefied? In that of London, the vpper, and lesse part is only vsed in seruice. Some of those greate fabricks haue bene, and might be vvell imploied as collegiate churches, for reading of lectures, and preseruing of puritie in doctrine, good manners, and learning: things of this nature doe indeed make them somvvhat vvorthy the repairing. The greatest Temples in the reformed churches are put to good vse, but vvhere there is not such vse, there it is not vvorth the cost. Mounsieur du Plesses obserueth that vvhen religion, and doctrine began to be corrupted, that they might couer it, and seeme no lesse religious, they fell to building of Temples, and Altars, to presse deuoute gestures, ceremonies, &c. euen so the Bishops, that vvant zeale against poperie, Arminianisme non residencie, and such errours, and abuses, as are crept into the church, flatter such friends, and supporters of them, as are mighty, or able to defend, & reward them, and in the meane time, to seeme no lesse religious, make greate religion of deuoute gestures, building, repairing, and adoring of Temples in both vvhich, the Papists exceede them: and as he saith, * *The vvorser sort of men are euer most spendfull in such things to shadow, and obscure the memorie of their euill acts.* It is true, that many vvho vvorship in spirit, and truth, and are zealous that doctrine may be preserued in the purity the Apostles left it, are yet too negligēt in deuoute gesture in praier, that some grovv too familiar, and saucie vvith God: this is ill, but the other is much vvorse, vvhen men seeke the outvvard, neglect due preaching, and hearing, the defence of the truth, & cause of God, in such cases as that of the Palatinate, the Rochellers, and the like, or flatter their false friends, and betraiers, such as the Duke, &c. for vvhile thus the true church of God, the liuing stones and Temples,

Plesses myst. of iniquit. progres. 24.

* Plesses vbi supra.

Mat. 23. 23.

vvherein

wherein God dwels, are spoiled and wasted, such mens calling for bodely gestures, & building of Temples, is but tithing of mint, and annise, and leauing the weightier matters vncared for, like hypocriticall Pharises. Yet who sees not that these are the chiefe things the Bishops looke after? who in the meane time thinke it sufficient, that Synods, and kings haue established their authoritie.

It is true that Solomon iustly deposed Abiathar the Priest, and put Zadock in his roome, that *Asa remoued his mother from being Queene, becausse she had made an idole*, which he destroied, as Hezechiah did the brasen serpent, when it was abused to idolatrie: that Iehoshaphat, and Iosiah put downe idollatrie, reformed the church, and caused the word of God to be duly taught: That Christian Kings, as *nursing fathers* haue great authority in like cases: but all this is, as was said of Synods, in things necessarie, as reformation of abuses suppressing errours, abolishing of idollatrie, and superstitious rites, and gouernments, reestablishing a preaching ministrie, and Elders, and ordaining ordinances, and ceremonies, so necessarie, as those aboue mencioned: That God will require it of them, if they doe not looke after these things. But for the Hierarchie, and popish ceremonies, so hurtfull, to proue that they may be maintained, I hope they will not say, Salomon built the high places, Ieroboam set vp Calues, Ahaz *saw an Altar* at Damascus, and made Vrijah the Priest build such a one, so prone are the clergie to thinke the will of the Prince a sufficient warrant, that any king of Israel, or Iudah did what he list in religion, that among the reft *Ahaziah walked in the waies* of the house of Ahab: for after the death of his father *they, & his mother were his counsellers to his destruction.* They should rather put the higher powers in minde of that, *why tempt ye God, to put a yoke vpon the necks of the Disciples, which neither our fathers, nor wee are able to it beare?* The

1. King. 2. 27. chap. 25. 13 2 Chro. 17. 6. 7.

1. King. 11 2. King. 16 10.

2. Chro. 22 34.

Act. 15. 10.

King of Kings vvould not doe it, but after he had finiſhed
Reu. 2.24. his Teſtament, he ſaith, *I will put vpon you none other burden*; and ſhall men then preſume that they may doe it, if they can get kings to authoriſe them? Kings ſhould remember that
Pſal. 2. Chriſt is ſet vpon the *holy hill of Sion*, as the only * King, and
* Iſa. 33. 22. lavvgiuer of his church in matters of religion: in regard vvhereof it is ſaid, *Be vviſe now therefore, o ye kings: be inſtructed ye Iudges of the earth. Serue the Lord vvith feare, and reioyce vvith trembling. Kiſſe the Sonne leaſt he be angrie*: as if he ſaid, ſhevv your ſubiection, and loue to him, in ſetting vp Gods throne, and ordinances, not Satans. VVhere any Eccleſiaſtical povver, and dominion is beſides, and againſt his ordinances, there hath Satan his throne, though in ſome gouernments, & orders more pernicious, then in others: among the Papiſts, in Popes, Cardinals, Ieſuits, Regulars, & Biſhops. In the Franciſcans, or Capuchins leſſe then in the Ieſuits: yet hath he it, as vvell in the beſt order of them, as in Mahumetans, or any other vvherein it is vvorſt. If Engliſh Biſhops haue a povver beſides, and againſt the ordinances of God, & that is pernicious to his kingdome, Satan hath his throne in them, though not in ſo deſperate a manner as in others.

It helpes not to ſay, that many of them ſtriue to doe God ſeruice in many things For ſo doe diuers in all thoſe orders of the Papiſts, and ſo far as they can doe it vvith the ſafety of their religion, and order; but caſt their crovvnes ordinances, ceremonies, traditions, and rules at the feete of Chriſt Ieſus, to haue them tried, and iudged by the vvord, they vvill not: no more vvill the Biſhops. VVhen I conſider hovv vveake their vſurped and tyrannicall titleis, I am amaſed that as yet, no Engliſh Biſhop euer did it. Yet vvhen I remember againe that the Scripture ſaith: *Gifts blind the eies of the vviſe*: that
Luk. 16. our Lord ſaith. *No man can ſerue two maiſters: ye can not ſerue*

God

God and Mammon. His ſeruants ye are to vvhome ye obey: then I vvonder the leſſe, I maruaile not that they doe not beleeue theſe things: becauſe indeed our Sauiour ſaith to ſuch men, *How can ye beleeue vvhich receiue honour one of another, and ſeeke not the honour, that commeth from God only?* and of ſuch men: *If any man doe his vvill, he ſhall know of the doctrine, vvhether it be of God or noe.* Theſe and their defenders can not vvell knovv, becauſe they are not vvilling to knovv it, much leſſe ſo to doe it, as to be reformed by it. They are reſolued to holde to the Hierarchie, becauſe they haue ſubſcribed, or for the honour, proffit, or peace they haue, or may haue by it, or vnder it, & vvithout vvhich, as things are they knovv not hovv to liue, much leſſe to preache, and doe good. Novv the great and mightie God *the father of lights*, vvith vvhome is no variablenes, and from vvhome *euery good, and perfit gift proceedeth:* giue them, and vs all the grace, that *denying our ſelues*, our ovvne affections, vviſdoms, proffits, earthly imaginations, vanities, and delights, vvee may become true Diſciples, and followvers of Chriſt, ſuch as truly ſeeke the kingdome of God, *and the righteouſnes thereof*, that by his mercie vvee may once come to ſee that ioyfull day, vvherein that bleſſed acclamation ſhall be heard, *Alleluia:*

For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Rom. 6.

Ioh. 5. 44.

Ioh. 7. 17.

Luk. 9.

Reuel. 19.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Pag. 1. line 20. for to reade the.
Pag. 2 line 23. for hath read hath bin. lin 32. art reade art.
Pag. 12. line 22. for Ovid. And in an.
Pag. 23. for the vvith, reade vvith the.
Pag. 29. for in like, reade vvho in like.
Pag. 41. line 7. for ſended, reade tended.
Pag. 45. the laſt line for terrent, read torrent.